BEST DOG STORIES

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BEST DOG STORIES

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On the ridge the Runt paused and looked back, the other dogs grouped about him

BEST DOG STORIES

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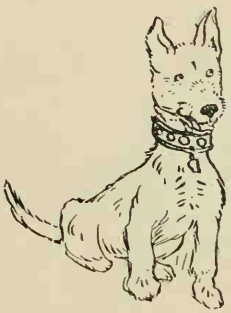

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BEST DOG STORIES

TO HUB—JUST A DOG

In the back files of a small Ohio daily is an obituary of Hub—just a dog. The following paragraphs taken from it seem to afford a glimpse into the hidden depths of the man who wrote it:

"It isn't orthodox to ascribe a soul to a dog. But Hub was loving and loyal, with a jealousy that tests its quality. He was reverent, patient, faithful. He was sympathetic, more than humanly so sometimes, for no lure could be devised to call him from the sick bed of mistress or master. He minded his own affairs—especially worthy of human emulation. He was modest and submissive where these were becoming, yet he assumed a guardianship of the home he sentineled until entry was properly vouched. He couldn't speak our language, though he somehow understood. But he could be and was eloquent with uttering eye and wagging tail and the other expressions of knowing dogs. No, perhaps he had no soul, but in these things are the essence of soul and the spirit of lovable life.

"Whether the Creator planned it so or environment and human companionship made it so, men may learn richly through the love and fidelity of a brave and devoted dog. Such loyalty might easily add luster to a crown of immortality."

The author of this tribute was Warren G. Harding, late President of the United States.

A TRIBUTE TO THE DOG

One of the most beautiful tributes ever paid a dumb animal came from the lips of the late Senator George Graham Vest. The occasion was a trial over the killing of a dog, which was held in a Missouri town when he was a young lawyer.

Senator Vest appeared for the plaintiff, while Senator Francis M. Cockrell, then a country practitioner, represented the defendant.

Young Vest took no interest in the testimony and made no notes, but at the close of the case arose, and in a soft voice made the following address:

"GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY:

"The best friend a man has in the world may turn against him, and become his enemy. His son or daughter that he has reared with loving care may prove ungrateful. Those who are nearest and dearest to us, those whom we trust with our happiness and our good name, may become traitors to their faith. The money that a man has, he may lose. It flies away from him, perhaps when he needs it most. A man's reputation may be sacrificed in a moment of

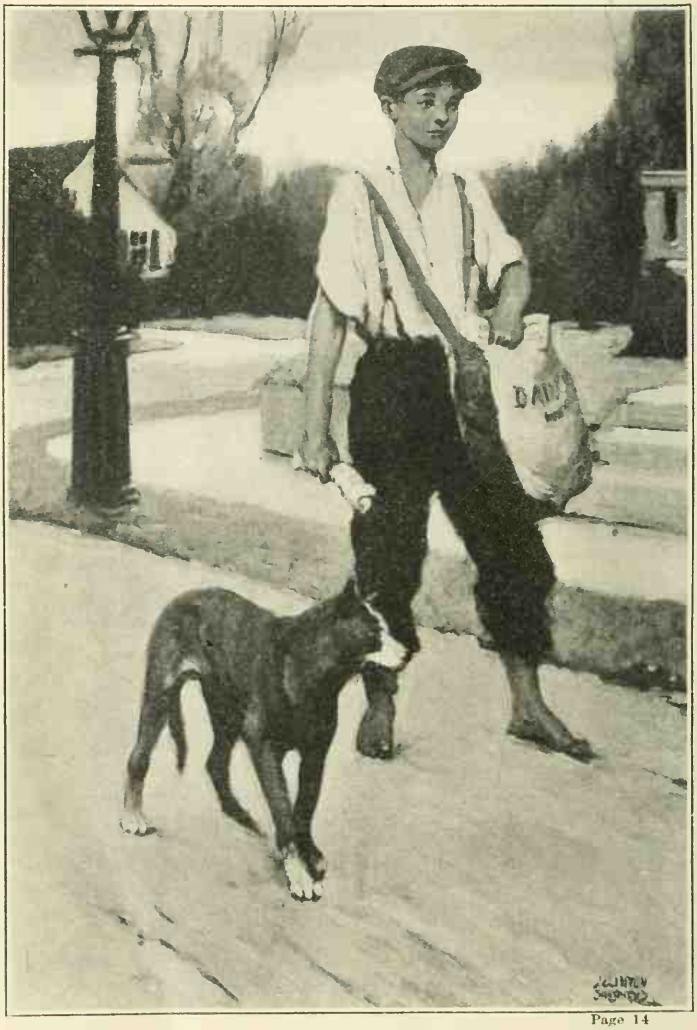
ill-considered action. The people who are prone to fall on their knees to do us honor when success is with us may be the first to throw the stone of malice when failure settles its cloud upon our heads.

"The one absolutely unselfish friend that man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous, is his dog. A man's dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and in sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground, where the wintry winds blow and the snow drives fiercely, if only he may be near his master's side. He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer; he will lick the wounds and sores that come in encounter with the roughness of the world. He guards the sleep of his pauper master as if he were a prince. When all other friends desert, he remains. When riches take wings, and reputation falls to pieces, he is as constant in his love as the sun in its journey through the heavens.

"If fortune drives the master forth an outcast in the world, friendless and homeless, the faithful dog asks no higher privilege than that of accompanying him, to guard him against danger, to fight against his enemies. And when the last scene of all comes, and death takes his

master in its embrace and his body is laid away in the cold ground, no matter if all other friends pursue their way, there by the grave-side will the noble dog be found, his head between his paws, his eyes sad, but open in alert watchfulness, faithful and true even in death."

When he concluded his remarks, there were but few dry eyes in the audience. The case was submitted without further argument, and the jury promptly returned a verdict for the plaintiff.



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Stubby's route wasn't nearly so long after he had Hero to go with him

THE ANARCHIST — HIS DOG[1]

By Susan Glaspell

Stubby had a route, and that was how he happened to get a dog. For the benefit of those who have never carried papers it should be thrown in that having a route means getting up just when there is really some fun in sleeping, lining up at the *Leader* office—maybe having a scrap with the fellow who says you took his place in the line—getting your papers all damp from the press, and starting for the outskirts of the city. Then you double up the paper in the way that will cause all possible difficulty in undoubling and hurl it with what force you have against the front door. It is good to have a route, for you at least earn your salt, so your father can't say *that* any more. If he does, you know it isn't so.

When you have a route, you whistle. All the fellows whistle. They may not feel like it, but it is the custom—as could be sworn to by many sleepy citizens. And as time goes on you succeed in acquiring the easy manner of a brigand.

[1]Reprinted by permission of the author from the *American Magazine*.

Stubby was little, and everything about him seemed sawed off just a second too soon—his nose, his fingers, and, most of all, his hair. His head was a faithful replica of a chestnut burr. His hair did not lie down and take things easy. It stood up—and out!—and gentle ladies couldn't possibly have let their hands sink into it—as we are told they do—for the hands just wouldn't sink. They'd have to float.

And alas, gentle ladies didn't particularly want their hands to sink into it. There was not that about Stubby's short person to cause the hands of gentle ladies to move instinctively to his head. Stubby bristled. That is, he appeared to bristle. Inwardly, Stubby yearned, though he would have swung his very best brigand manner on the spot were you to suggest so offensive a thing. Just to look at Stubby you'd never in a thousand years guess what a funny feeling he had sometimes when he got to the top of the hill where his route began and could see a long way down the river and the town curled in on the other side. Sometimes when the morning sun was shining through a mist—making things awful queer—some of the mist got into Stubby's squinty little eyes. After the mist behaved that way he always whistled so rakishly and threw his papers with

such abandonment that people turned over in their beds and muttered things about having that little heathen of a paper boy shot.

All along the route are dogs. Indeed, routes are distinguished by their dogs. Mean routes are those that have terraces and mean dogs; good routes—where the houses are close together and the dogs run out and wag their tails. Though Stubby's greater difficulty came through the wagging tails; he carried in a collie neighborhood, and all collies seemed consumed with mighty ambitions to have routes. If you spoke to them—and how could you *help* speaking to a collie when he came bounding out to you that way?—you had an awful time chasing him back, and when he got lost—and it seemed collies spent most of their time getting lost—the woman would put her head out next morning and want to know if you had coaxed her dog away!

Some of the fellows had dogs that went with them on their routes. One day one of them asked Stubby why he didn't have a dog, and he replied in surly fashion that he didn't have one 'cause he didn't want one. If he wanted one, he'd guessed he'd have one.

And there was no one within earshot old enough or wise enough—or tender enough—

to know from the meanness of Stubby's tone, and by his evil scowl, that his heart was just breaking to own a dog.

One day a new dog appeared along the route. He was yellow, and looked like a cheap edition of a bulldog. He was that kind of dog most accurately described by saying it is hard to describe him, the kind you say is just dog—and everybody knows.

He tried to follow Stubby; not in the trusting, bounding manner of the collies—not happily, but hopingly. Stubby, true to the ethics of his profession, chased him back where he had come from. That there might be nothing whatever on his conscience, he even threw a stone after him. Stubby was an expert in throwing things at dogs. He could seem to just miss them and yet never hit them.

The next day it happened again; but just as he had a clod poised for throwing, a window went up and a woman called: "For pity *sake*, little boy, don't chase him back *here!*"

"Why—why—why, ain't he yours?" called Stubby.

"Mercy, *no!* We can't chase him away."

"Whose is he?" demanded Stubby.

"Why, he's nobody's! He just hangs around. I wish you'd coax him away."

Well, that was a *new* one! And then all in a heap it rushed over Stubby that this dog who was nobody's dog could, if he coaxed him away—and the woman *wanted* him coaxed away—be his dog!

And because that idea had such a strange effect on him he sang out, in offhand fashion: "Oh, all right, I'll take him away and drown him for you!"

"Oh, little *boy*," called the woman, "why, don't *drown* him!"

"Oh, all right, I'll shoot him then!" called obliging Stubby, whistling for the dog—while all morning long the woman grieved over having sent a helpless little dog away with that perfectly *brutal* paper boy!

Stubby's mother was washing. She looked up from her tubs on the back porch to say, "Wish you'd take that bucket—," then, seeing what was slinking behind her son, straightway assumed the rôle of Destiny with, "Git *out* o' here!"

Stubby snapped his fingers behind his back as much as to say, "Wait a minute."

"A woman gave him to me," he said to his mother.

"*Gave* him to you?" she scoffed. "I sh' think she would!"

Then something happened that had not happened many times in Stubby's short lifetime. He acknowledged his feelings.

"I'd like to keep him. I'd like to have a dog."

His mother shook her hands and the flying suds seemed expressing her scorn. "Huh! *That* ugly good-for-nothing thing?"

The dog edged in between Stubby's feet and crouched there. "He could go with me on my route," said Stubby. "He'd kind of be company for me."

And when he had said that he knew all at once just how lonesome he had been sometimes on his route, how he had wanted something to "kind of be company" for him.

His face twitched and he stooped down to pat the dog. Mrs. Lynch looked at her son—youngest of her five. Not the hardness of her heart but the hardness of life had made her unpracticed in moments of tenderness. Something in the way he was patting the dog suggested to her that Stubby was a "queer one." He *was* kind of little to be carrying papers all by himself.

Stubby looked up. "He could eat what's thrown away."

That was an error in diplomacy. The woman's

face hardened. "Mighty little'll be thrown away *this* winter," she muttered.

But just then Mrs. Johnson appeared on the other side of the fence and began hanging up her clothes, and with that Mrs. Lynch saw her way to justify herself in indulging her son. Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Lynch had "had words." "You just let him stay around, Stubby," she called, and you would have supposed from her tone it was Stubby who was on the other side of the fence. "Maybe he'll keep the neighbors' chickens out! Them that ain't got chickens o' their own don't want to be bothered with the neighbors'!"

That was just how it happened that he stayed; and no one but Stubby knew—and possibly Stubby didn't either—how it happened that he was named Hero. It would seem that Hero should be a noble St. Bernard, or a particularly mean-looking bulldog, not a stocky, shapeless, squint-eyed yellow dog with one ear bitten half off and one leg built on an entirely different plan from its fellow legs. Possibly Stubby's own spiritual experiences had suggested to him that you weren't necessarily the way you looked.

The chickens were pretty well kept out, though no one ever saw Hero doing any of it.

Perhaps Hero had been too long associated with chasing to desire any part in it—even with rôles reversed. If Stubby could help it, no one really saw Stubby doing the chasing either; he became skilled in chasing when he did not appear to be chasing; then he would get Hero to barking and turn to his mother with, "Guess you don't see so many chickens round nowadays."

The fellows in the line jeered at Hero at first, but they soon tired of it when Stubby said he didn't want the cur but his mother made him stay around to keep the chickens out. He was a fine chicken dog, Stubby grudgingly admitted. He couldn't keep him from following him, said Stubby, so he just let him come. Sometimes when they were waiting in line Stubby made ferocious threats at Hero. He was going to break his back and wring his head off and do other heartless things which for some reason he never started in right then and there to accomplish.

It was different when they were alone—and they were alone a good deal. Stubby's route wasn't nearly so long after he had Hero to go with him. When winter came and five o'clock was dark and cold for starting out, it was pretty good to have Hero trotting at his heels.

And Hero always wanted to go; it was never so rainy nor so cold that that yellow dog seemed to think he would rather stay home by the fire. Then Hero was always waiting for him when he came home from school. Stubby would sing out, "Hello, cur!" and the tone was such that Hero did not grasp that he was being insulted. Sometimes when there was nobody about, Stubby picked Hero up in his arms and squeezed him—Stubby had not had a large experience with squeezing. At those times Hero would lick the boy's face and whimper a little love whimper, and such were the workings of Stubby's heart and mind that that made him of quite as much account as if he really had chased the chickens. Stubby, who had seen the way dogs can look at you out of their eyes, was not one to say of a dog, "What good is he?"

But it seemed there were such people. There were even people who thought you oughtn't to have a dog to love and to love you if you weren't rich enough to pay two dollars and a half for the luxury.

Stubby first heard of those people one night in June. The father of the Lynch family was sitting in the back yard reading the paper when Hero and Stubby came running in from the

alley. It was one of those moments when Hero, forgetting the bleakness of his youth, abandoned himself to the joy of living. He was tearing round and round Stubby, barking, when Stubby's father called out: "Here! Shut up there, you cur! You better lie low. You're goin' to be shot the first of August."

Stubby—and as regards the joy of living Hero had done as much for Stubby as Stubby for Hero—came to a halt. The fun and frolic just died right out of him and he stood there staring at his father, who had turned the page and was settling himself to a new horror. At last Stubby spoke. "Why's he goin' to be shot on the first of August?" he asked in a tight little voice.

His father looked up. "Why's he goin' to be shot? You got any two dollars and a half to pay for him?"

He laughed as though it were a joke. Well, it was something of a joke. Stubby got ten cents a week out of his paper money. The rest he "turned in."

Then he went back to his paper. There was another long pause before Stubby asked, in that tight queer little voice: "What'd I have to have two dollars and a half for? Nobody owns him."

His parent stirred scornfully. "Suppose you never heard of a dog tax did you? S'pose they don't learn you nothin' like that at school?"

Yes, Stubby did know that dogs had to have checks, but he hadn't thought anything about that in connection with Hero. He ventured another question. "You have to have 'em for all dogs even if you just picked 'em up on the street and took care of 'em when nobody else would?"

"You bet you do," his parent assured him genially. "You pay your dog tax or the policeman comes on the first of August and shoots your dog."

With that he dismissed it for good, burying himself in his paper. For a minute the boy stood there in silence. Then he walked slowly around the house and sat down where his father couldn't see him. Hero followed—it was a way Hero had. The dog sat down beside the boy, and after a couple of minutes the boy's arm stole furtively around him and they sat there very still for a long time.

As nobody but Hero paid much attention to him, nobody but Hero noticed how quiet and queer Stubby was for the next three days. Hero must have noticed it, for he was quiet and queer, too. He followed wherever Stubby would let him, and every time he got a chance he

would nestle up to him and look into his face—the way even cur dogs have of doing when they fear something is wrong.

At the end of three days Stubby, his little freckled face set and grim, took his stand in front of his father and came right out with: "I want to keep one week's paper money to pay Hero's tax."

His father's chair had been tilted back against a tree. Now it came down with a thud. "Oh, you *do*, do you?"

"I can earn the other fifty cents at little jobs."

"You *can*, can you? Now ain't you smart!"

The tone brought the blood to Stubby's face. "I think I got a right to," he said, his voice low.

The man's face, which had been taunting, grew ugly. "Look a-here, young man, none o' your lip!"

The tears rushed to Stubby's eyes but he stumbled on: "I guess Hero's got a right to some of my paper money when he goes with me every day on my route."

At that his father stared for a minute and then burst into a loud laugh. Blinded with tears, the boy turned to the house.

After he had gone to bed that night Stubby's mother heard a sound from the alcove at the

head of the stairs where her youngest child slept. As the sound kept on she got out of her bed and went to Stubby's cot.

"Look here," she said, awkwardly, but not unkindly, "this won't do. We're poor folks, Freddie" (it was only once in a while she called him that), "all we can do to live these times—we can't pay no dog tax."

As Stubby did not speak she added: "I know you've taken to the dog, but just the same you ain't to feel hard to your pa. He can't help it—and neither can I. Things is as they is—and nobody can help it."

As despite this bit of philosophy Stubby was still gulping back sobs, she added what she thought a master stroke in consolation. "Now just you go right to sleep, and if they come to take this dog away maybe you can pick up another one in the fall."

The sobs suddenly stopped and Stubby stared at her. And what he said after a long stare was: "I guess there ain't no use talking about it."

"That's right," said she, relieved; "now you go right off to sleep." And she left him, never dreaming why Stubby had seen there was no use talking about it.

Nor did he talk about it; but a change came over Stubby's funny little person in the next

few days. The change was particularly concerned with his jaw, though there was something different, too, in the light in his eyes as he looked straight ahead, and something different in his voice when he said: "Come on, Hero."

He got so he could walk into a store and demand, in a hard little voice, "Want a boy to do anything for you?" and when they said, "Got more boys than we know what to do with, sonny," Stubby would say, "All right," and stalk sturdily out again. Sometimes they laughed and said, "What could *you* do?" and then Stubby would stalk out, but possibly a little less sturdily.

Vacation came the next week, and still he had found nothing. His father, however, had been more successful. He found a place where they wanted a boy to work in a yard a couple of hours in the morning. For that Stubby was to get a dollar and a half a week. But that was to be turned in for his "keep." There were lots of mouths to feed—as Stubby's mother was always calling to her neighbor across the alley.

But the yard gave Stubby an idea, and he earned some dimes and one quarter in the next week. Most folks thought he was too little—one kind lady told him he ought to be playing,

not working—but there were people who would let him take a big shears and cut grass around flower beds, and things like that. This he had to do afternoons, when he was supposed to be off playing, and when he came home his mother sometimes said some folks had it easy—playing around all day.

It was now the first week in July and Stubby had a dollar and twenty cents. It was getting to the point where he would wake in the night and find himself sitting up in bed, hands clenched. He dreamed dreams about how folks would let him live if he had ninety-nine cents, but how he only had ninety-seven and a half, so they were going to shoot him.

Then one day he found Mr. Stuart. He was passing the house after having asked three people if they wanted a boy, and they didn't, and seemed so surprised at the idea of their wanting him that Stubby's throat was all tight, when Mr. Stuart sang out: "Say, boy, want a little job?"

It seemed at first it must be a joke—or a dream—anybody asking him if he *wanted* one, but the man was beckoning to him, so he ran up the steps.

"Now here's a little package"—he took something out of the mail box. "It doesn't

belong here. It's to go to Three hundred and two Pleasant Street. You take it for a dime?"

Stubby nodded.

As he was going down the steps the man called: "Say, boy, how'd you like a steady job?"

For the first minute it seemed pretty mean—making fun of a fellow that way!

"This will be here every day. Suppose you come each day, about this time, and take it over there, not mentioning it to anybody."

Stubby felt weak. "Why, all right," he managed to say.

"I'll give you fifty cents a week. That fair?"

"Yes, sir," said Stubby, doing some quick calculation.

"Then here goes for the first week"—and he handed him the other forty cents.

It was funny how fast the world could change! Stubby wanted to run—he hadn't been doing much running of late. He wanted to go home and get Hero to go with him to Pleasant Street, but didn't. No, *sir*, when you had a job you had to 'tend to things!

Well, a person *could* do things, if he had to, thought Stubby. No use saying you couldn't; you *could* if you had to. He was back in tune with life. He whistled; he turned up his collar

in the old rakish way; he threw a stick at a cat. Back home he jumped over the fence instead of going in the gate—lately he had actually been using the gate. And he cried, "Get out of my sight, you cur!" in tones which, as Hero understood things, meant anything but getting out of sight.

He was a little boy again. He slept at night as little boys sleep. He played with Hero along the route—taught him some new tricks. His jaw relaxed from its grownupishness.

It was funny about those Stuarts. Sometimes he saw Mr. Stuart, but never anybody else; the place seemed shut up. But each day the little package was there, and every day he took it to Pleasant Street and left it at the door there—that place seemed shut up, too.

When it was well into the second week Stubby ventured to say something about the next fifty cents.

The man fumbled in his pockets. Something in his face was familiar to experienced Stubby. It suggested a having to have two dollars and a half by August first and only having a dollar and a quarter state of mind.

"I haven't got the change. Pay you at the end of next week for the whole business. That all right?"

Stubby considered. "I've got to have it before the first of August," he said.

At that the man laughed—funny kind of laugh, it was, and muttered something. But he told Stubby he would have it before the first.

It bothered Stubby. He wished the man had given it to him *then*. He would rather get it each week and keep it himself. A little of the grown-up look stole back.

After that he didn't see Mr. Stuart, and one day, a week or so later, the package was not in the box and a man who wore the kind of clothes Stubby's father wore came around the house and asked him what he was doing.

Stubby was wary. "Oh, I've got a little job I do for Mr. Stuart."

The man laughed. "I had a little job I did for Mr. Stuart, too. You paid in advance?"

Stubby pricked up his ears.

"'Cause if you ain't, I'd advise you to look out for a little job some'eres else."

Then it came out. Mr. Stuart was broke; more than that, he was "off his nut." Lots of people were doing little jobs for him—there was no sense in any of them, and now he had suddenly been called out of town!

There was a trembly feeling through Stubby's insides, but outwardly he was bristling just like

his hair bristled as he demanded: "Where am I to get what's coming to me?"

"'Fraid you won't get it, sonny. We're all in the same boat."

"I *got* to have it!" cried Stubby. "I *got* to!"

The man shook his head. "*That* cuts no ice. Hard luck, sonny, but we've got to take our medicine in this world. 'Taint no medicine for kids, though," he muttered.

Stubby's face just then was too much for him. He put his hand in his pocket and drew out a dime, saying: "There now. You run along and get you a soda and forget your troubles. It ain't always like this. You'll have better luck next time."

But Stubby did not get the soda. He put the dime in his pocket and turned toward home. Something was the matter with his legs—they acted funny about carrying him. He tried to whistle, but something was the matter with his lips, too.

Counting this dime, he now had a dollar and eighty cents, and it was the twenty-eighth day of July. "Thirty days has September—April, June, and November—" he was saying to himself. Then July was one of the long ones. Well, *that* was a good thing! Been a great deal worse if July was a short one! Again he tried

to whistle, and that time did manage to pipe out a few shrill little notes.

When Hero came running up the hill to meet him he slapped him on the back and cried, "Hello, Hero!" in tones fairly swaggering with bravado.

That night he engaged his father in conversation—the phrase is well adapted to the way Stubby went about it. "How is it about—'bout things like taxes"—Stubby crossed his knees and swung one foot to show his indifference—"if you have *almost* enough—do they sometimes let you off?"—the detachment was a shade less perfect on that last.

His father laughed scoffingly. "Well, I guess *not!*"

"I thought maybe," said Stubby, "if a person had *tried* awful hard—and had *most* enough—"

Something inside him was all shaky, so he didn't go on. His father said that *trying* didn't have anything to do with it.

It was hard for Stubby not to sob out that he thought trying *ought* to have something to do with it, but he only made a hissing noise between his teeth and that took the place of the whistle that wouldn't come.

"Kind of seems," he resumed, "if a person would have had enough if they hadn't been

beat out of it, maybe—if he done the best he could—"

His father snorted derisively and informed him that doing the best you could made no difference to the government; hard luck stories didn't *go* when it came to the laws of the land.

Thereupon Stubby took a little walk out to the alley and spent a considerable time in contemplation of the neighbor's chicken yard. When he came back he walked right up to his father and standing there, feet planted, shoulders squared, wanted to know, in a desperate little voice: "If some one else was to give—say a dollar and eighty cents for Hero, could I take the other seventy out of my paper money?"

The man turned upon him roughly. "Uh-*huh! That's it*, is it? *That's* why you're gettin' so smart all of a sudden about government! Look a-here. Just I'me tell you something. You're lucky if you git enough to *eat* this winter. Do you know there's talk of the factory shuttin' down? *Dog* tax! Why, you're lucky if you git *shoes*."

Stubby had turned away and was standing with his back to his father, hands in his pockets. "And I'me tell you some'en else, young man. If you got any dollar and eighty cents you give it to your mother!"

As Stubby was turning the corner of the house he called after him: "How'd you like to have me get you an automobile?"

He went doggedly from house to house the next afternoon, but nobody had any jobs. When Hero came running out to him that night he patted him, but didn't speak.

That evening as they were sitting in the back yard—Stubby and Hero sat a little apart from the others—his father was discoursing with his brother about anarchists. They were getting commoner, his father thought. There were a good many of them at the shop. They didn't call themselves that, but that was what they were.

"Well, what is an anarchist, anyhow?" Stubby's mother wanted to know.

"Why, an anarchist," her lord informed her, "is one that's against the government. He don't believe in law and order. The real bad anarchists shoot them that tries to enforce the laws of the land. Guess if you'd read the papers these days you'd know."

Stubby's brain had been going round and round and these words caught in it as it whirled. The government—the laws of the land—why, it was the government and the laws of the land that were going to shoot Hero! It was the

government—the laws of the land—that didn't care how hard you had *tried*—didn't care whether you had been cheated—didn't care how you *felt*—didn't care about anything except getting the money! His brain got hotter. Well, *he* didn't believe in the government either. He was one of those people—those anarchists—that were against the laws of the land. He'd done the very best he could and now the government was going to take Hero from him just because he couldn't get—*couldn't* get—that other seventy cents.

Stubby's mother didn't hear her son crying that night. That was because Stubby was successful in holding the pillow over his head.

The next morning he looked on one of the papers he was carrying to see what it said about anarchists. Sure enough, some place way off somewhere the anarchists had shot somebody that was trying to enforce the laws of the land. The laws of the land—that didn't *care!*

That afternoon as Stubby tramped around looking for jobs he saw a good many boys playing with dogs. None of them seemed to be worrying about whether their dogs had checks. To Stubby's hot brain and sore little heart came the thought that they didn't love

their dogs any more than he loved Hero, either. But the government didn't care whether he loved Hero or not! Pooh! What was that to the government? All it cared about was getting the money. He stood for a long time watching a boy giving his dog a bath. The dog was trying to get away and the boy and another boy were having lots of fun about it. All of a sudden Stubby turned and ran away—ran down an alley, ran through a number of alleys, just kept on running, blinded by the tears.

And that night, in the middle of the night, that something in his head going round and round, getting hotter and hotter, he decided that the only thing for him to do was to shoot the policeman who came to take Hero away on the morning of August first—that would be day after tomorrow.

All night long policemen with revolvers stood around his bed. When his mother called him at half-past four he was shaking so he could scarcely get into his clothes.

On his way home from his route Stubby had to pass a police station. He went on the other side of the street and stood there looking across. One of the policemen was playing with a dog!

Suddenly he wanted to rush over and throw himself down at that policeman's feet—sob

out the story—ask him to please, *please* wait till he could get that other seventy cents.

But just then the policeman got up and went in the station, and Stubby was afraid to go in the police station.

That policeman complicated things for Stubby. Before, it had been quite simple. The policeman would come to enforce the law of the land; but he did not believe in the law of the land, so he would just kill the policeman. But it seemed the policeman wasn't just a person who enforced the law of the land. He was a person also who played with a dog.

After a whole day of walking around thinking about it—his eyes burning, his heart pounding—he decided that the thing to do was to warn the policemen by writing a letter. He did not know whether real anarchists warned them or not, but Stubby couldn't get reconciled to the idea of killing a person without telling him you were going to do it. It seemed that even a policeman should be told—especially a policeman who played with a dog.

The following letter was penciled by a shaking hand late that afternoon. It was written upon a barrel in the Lynch woodshed, on a piece of wrapping paper, a bristly little head bending over it.

To the policeman who comes to take my dog because I ain't got the two-fifty—cause I tried but could only get one-eighty—cause a man was off his nut and didn't pay me what I earned—

This is to tell you I am an anarchist and do not believe in the government or the law and the order and will shoot you when you come. I wouldn't a been an anarchist if I could have got the money but I tried to get it but I couldn't get it—not enough. I don't think the government had ought to take things you like like I like Hero so I am against the government.

Thought I would tell you first.

Yours truly,
F. Lynch

I don't see how I can shoot you cause where would I get a revolver. So I will have to do it with the butcher knife. Folks are sometimes killed that way cause my father read it in the paper.

If you want to take the one-eighty and leave Hero till I can get the seventy I will not do anything to you and would be very much obliged.

1113 Willow Street

The letter properly addressed and sealed—not for nothing had Stubby's teacher given those instructions in the art of letter writing—was sent. The stamp he paid for out of the dime the man gave him to get a soda with—and forget his troubles.

Now Bill O'Brien was on the desk at the police station, and Miss Murphy of the *Herald*

stood in with Bill. That was how it came about that the next morning a fat policeman, an eager-looking girl, and a young fellow with a kodak descended into the hollow to 1113 Willow Street.

A little boy peeped around the corner of the house—such a wild-looking little boy—hair all standing up and eyes glittering. A yellow dog ran out and barked. The boy darted out and grabbed the dog in his arms and in that moment the girl called to the man with the black box: "Right now! Quick! Get him!"

They were getting ready to shoot Hero! That box was the way the police did it. He must—oh, he *must*—*must* . . . . Boy and dog sank to the ground—but just the same the boy was shielding the dog!

When Stubby had pulled himself together the policeman was holding Hero. He said that Hero was certainly a fine dog—he had a dog a good deal like him at home. And Miss Murphy—she was choking back sobs herself—knew how he could earn the seventy cents that afternoon.

In such wise do a good anarchist and a good story go down under the same blow. Some of those sobs Miss Murphy choked back got into what she wrote about Stubby and a yellow dog, and the next day citizens with no sense

of the dramatic sent money enough to check Hero through life.

At first Stubby's father said he had a good mind to lick him. But something in the quality of Miss Murphy's journalism left a hazy feeling of there being something remarkable about his son. He confided to his good wife that it wouldn't surprise him much if Stubby was some day president. Somebody had to be president, said he, and he had noticed it was generally those who in their youthful days did things that made lively reading in the newspapers.

ONE SMART PUP[1]

By Frank Richardson Pierce

"I am afraid we'll have to drown the runt of the bunch!" announced Dean, with obvious reluctance. There was an expression of deep regret upon his strong face as he contemplated the playful group of puppies. An even dozen there were—sturdy little Malemutes, awkward in movement; feet seemingly many sizes too large; baby teeth as sharp as needles and as white as snow, snow gleaming from pink jaws.

They snapped and growled in their play, tugging at an ear, leg, tail that happened to be conveniently within reach. Each lived in the happy present, as children do. The future lay ahead, a life of long days tugging at heavy sleds over heavier trails, facing the rigors of arctic winters, of gnawing at the ice balls that formed on their pads, of sleeping on their ration of frozen fish, so the heat of their bodies would thaw it sufficiently to eat, of serving mankind as it is given no other breed to serve.

Of the pack of heavy-coated puppies, the one usually beneath the others, the one with the

[1]Reprinted by permission of the author from the *American Magazine*.

brightest eyes, the shortest legs, yet by far the most intelligent and active despite his physical handicap, was the Runt. In the days that were to come, when perhaps Dean's very life depended upon the strength of his dogs, the Runt would be a liability. It is the unwritten law of the frozen regions that only the strong of heart and body shall survive, a natural law that governs all living things.

As Dean would have stood out from a group of rugged men, so did the dogs he bred stand out from the others. In the man's make-up was a deep love for dogs, any kind and size of dog, even mangy mongrels of the alleys, but above all he loved Malemutes. His love and sympathy urged him to permit the Runt to live; but the law of the land, which knows not the meaning of love and sympathy, ordered otherwise, and he knew the Runt must go.

"Hang it all," he growled, "I'll have to drown him!" He was silent a moment, then added desperately, "Or something. He'll eat his share of food, but he can't do his share of the work, and that is a burden on the others."

"Ba Gar!" protested Le Mar, the French-Canadian who planned to winter in with Dean. "You no kill those pup! He's the smartest feller in the bunch!"

"It's pretty tough all around," Dean replied; "but you can see he's a runt. He'll never be a big dog. His legs will always be short. If I lived in town, I wouldn't care; but up here, where every pound of food counts, it's different. He's got to go, poor little cuss!"

For the first time the Runt noticed the two men. His fellow pups immediately became a minor consideration. He scrambled and squirmed through the irresponsible pack, spilled over the last, and landed nose foremost in the dirt, simply because his forelegs were not long enough to prevent such a mishap. He squatted down upon his haunches and eyed Dean quizzically, cocking his head first to right, then to left.

When Le Mar spoke, the Runt's attention was turned instantly toward him. He waited patiently for some sign of recognition from the men. None forthcoming, his eyes brightened with a roguish gleam and he reared his body upward, nipping at Dean's bootlace with his sharp teeth. Then, his none too steady legs giving way beneath him, he tumbled into a furry heap; but he still held to the bootlace, his eyes rolling in quaint humor until the whites showed. This was real sport, far superior to biting another pup's tail or leg.

"Aw! Aw!" murmured Le Mar, "the leetle Runt, ba Gar!"

"You win!" cried Dean. "I simply can't do it now! Feast or famine, we'll find enough for you to eat, even if I have to share mine."

Through the long, balmy days of a glorious Alaskan summer, the Runt vied with his brothers in the matter of food consumption. Twice a day Dean placed great quantities of food before the growing pups. A mad scramble, a few gulps, and it had vanished, leaving each pup hungrier than before. Despite his handicap, the Runt secured his share. Perhaps the strength of the food went to develop his brain, to make his bright, humorous eyes still brighter; certainly his body did not develop to any appreciable degree. He grew, of course, but the others developed by leaps and bounds.

"Look at those legs!" commented Dean one day. "If I didn't know otherwise, I'd say there is a strain of the dachshund in him."

"Ba Gar," responded Le Mar, "look at those bright eye—smartest feller—"

"Don't I know it?" interrupted Dean. "If he only had a body to match that brain of his, what a wonderful lead dog he would make!"

The others gradually took on names. There was "Moose," so named because he was the

biggest of the several litters; and "Shorty," and "Mike," and "Cultus," the bad dog, and "Skookum," who was strong. And the smallest of all was the "Runt."

At an age when pups of warmer climes are taught to heel, drop, and ho, the Malemutes were fitted with small harnesses attached to a block of wood, which they dragged over the grass as they learned that "Gee!" meant swing to the right, "Haw!" to the left, "Mush on!" to go, and "Whoa!" to stop. Often Dean carried a whip, but their woolly backs never felt the bite of the lash—never would, in fact. Dean's method of training was different. The pistol-like cracks were used to emphasize commands and not to force obedience through fear. The Runt viewed the training of his fellows with interest, while his active brain speculated on the reason why *his* shoulders were never fitted with a harness, why *he* was not permitted the joy of this fascinating new game. Perhaps his stout little heart even felt a twinge of unhappiness when he was not allowed to join with his brothers in dragging the block. The Malemute pup instinctively enjoys work, and when in leash will lunge forward and pull for all he is worth, making even a strong man exert himself to hold the dog in check. The Runt did the next

best thing; he trailed behind the others. Without knowing it, he had taken an optimistic view of life. Early he had discovered that a pup with very short legs could keep pace with one of long legs by the simple expedient of taking two steps to one. Logical enough was the Runt's way of reasoning, and he followed it.

Shortly before the snow fell, the Runt found himself in his first real fight. Just how it started none of the half-grown dogs knew, but Cultus was supposed to have been the instigator. The Runt found himself at the bottom of the snarling pack. Dean burst from the cabin, a warlike peacemaker. To his amazement, the Runt held the field very much to himself. The battle was over as suddenly as it had begun. A number of pups were nursing minor wounds; others were pondering on the futility of warfare; but the Runt, still somewhat dazed, was experiencing the sweetness of his first victory. Literally the under dog, he had turned disadvantage to advantage and made the most of his position.

Dean noticed a change from that day. When the irresponsible pack took a notion to romp afield, the Runt assumed leadership, the others trailing along behind. At such times he would make his stubby legs move at top speed, though his brothers cantered along without effort.

"Poor little devil!" whispered Dean one day as the pack returned after an absence of nearly three hours down the creek. "He's a natural leader, but his little heart is too stout for his short legs." The others were still in a playful mood, but the Runt was exhausted. None had disputed his leadership, but it had cost him heavily in strength.

With the coming of the first snow the old dogs read the signs. After a summer of ease, work would now begin. There were several long trips for supplies to the distant mining camp, as well as shorter trips. Dean usually bagged a moose in the fall and hauled the meat to camp with the team. To obtain sufficient fish for his team during the winter, he would make a number of excursions to Fish Lake.

The Runt was the first of the half-grown dogs to scent the unusual. He romped around as Dean brought forth the sled and harnessed the old dogs; then he manifested extreme hopefulness, as several of the younger dogs were harnessed beside their elders. This was the final course previous to actual work with the sled. It taught them to perform real work, to pull with the others, to swing with them, and instilled the first feeling of pride and responsibility.

The Runt's spirits ebbed; but he was not yet beaten. He floundered through the fresh snow at top speed and barely held his own. A hundred yards from the cabin Dean stopped, and to the Runt's ears came the cruelest words he had ever heard: "Go on home! Go back, Runt!" Dean had spoken them kindly at first; then, as the Runt squatted down in the snow to argue the point, a new and severe note crept into his voice, but the Runt stood fast. The others were bound on a new adventure, why not he? True, it was a different sort of trail from what he had traversed in the summer, and a dog's legs sometimes sank into this soft, cold white stuff until it quite reached his middle; but if a dog kept constantly at it, wouldn't he get somewhere? He most certainly would.

"Go on back!"

Disgraced and disappointed, the Runt bowed his head in shame, but his stubby, determined legs did not move.

"Hey! Le Mar!" shouted Dean. "Come and get the Runt! He wants to go along, and the little devil is floundering in snow to his belly already."

With pipe gripped firmly between his teeth, Le Mar emerged from the cabin, a kindly grin upon his face. "Ba Gar, those Runt, one smart

pup!" commented the man, and he caught up the Runt by the scruff of his neck and carried him to the cabin, an inglorious, limp, crestfallen object. From the corner of his eye the Runt had seen the team leap into the harness in response to Dean's "Mush on!" had watched his ungainly fellows emulate their elders and every unharnessed pup romp happily in the sled's wake, an ecstatic pack enjoying their first real trail experience.

For several minutes after Dean had vanished, Le Mar regarded the Runt sympathetically, then, muttering something in French, he donned his parka and called the Runt to follow. Outside, he fitted a small harness to the Runt's shoulders, attached it to a small piece of wood, then set off, carefully breaking a trail about the cabin. The Runt followed happily; never had life been sweeter than at that moment. And when Le Mar quit after a half-hour of it, the Runt was still ready for more.

But the kindly Le Mar could not always give time to the Runt's entertainment when the others were away. The hateful words "Go back home!" came frequently, and seared the impression of disgrace on the Runt's active brain. He did not understand why; but he sensed he was not wanted. Above all, he wanted

to serve the big, friendly man who was always kind except for this one thing.

Now that they were working, the half-grown dogs cared less for aimless excursions about the cabin. The Runt was still their acknowledged leader, and when he trotted away they followed dutifully enough, but they would have preferred the comfort of the kennel.

Twice, when Dean made short trips, the fateful "Go back home!" did not fall on the Runt's ears. Instead, the man smiled and said, "Come along, Runt!" His joy at this was boundless, and death itself in this man-god's service would have been sweet. The trips were far too short, which, if he had known it, was the reason he was permitted to accompany the others.

When the lakes and rivers were frozen and the grip of the arctic winter lay heavy on the land, Dean prepared for an extended trip to Fish Lake. It was a day's mushing from the cabin, and he would remain about a week, depending upon his luck in securing fish.

"It's quite a trip," commented Dean, "but I haven't got the heart to leave the Runt behind. He does enjoy trail work so, and the loyal little fellow is lots of company. I'll take him with me, and when he tires he can ride on the sled; the trail is pretty well packed anyway, and the

going for short-legged pups accordingly is much easier."

Le Mar watched the interesting expedition's start two days later. Dawn of the short day was still far away as Dean cracked his whip. A team of seven dogs settled down as one, the sled lunged forward, and with a final wave of his hand he was off. Close to his heels followed the Runt, and trailing behind him were eleven other pups.

Le Mar remained standing motionless in the doorway until the last pup had vanished from view, then entered the cabin and settled down for a week of loneliness. In the winter kennel beneath the cabin his own team quarreled among themselves over real and fancied wrongs.

Dean's Malemutes were equal to averaging six miles an hour over a good trail with a light load. This morning, with the Runt's short legs in mind, he cut down the speed to four miles an hour, and broke trail across country until he came to the river bank, five miles away. Below, the frozen stream lay gleaming in the first light of dawn. Descending to its inviting surface, he lifted the Runt to the sled and set off at top speed. He could make real time now and reach the fishing camp thirty-three miles ahead, by night, provided the pups could

maintain the pace. It would be a good test of their physical strength and courage.

Shortly after noon Dean passed the blazed tree on the river bank that marked the twenty-three-mile point. The team was still fresh, tails curled over their backs, tireless. The pups no longer cavorted about, but plodded steadily, stopping occasionally to investigate some vagrant and mysterious odor that chanced to reach their curious nostrils; then to race like a pack of young wolves to overtake the sled.

In a land where fortune smiles when least expected, tragedy strikes without warning. One moment, the cold silence of the land was broken only by the soft padding of many feet and the gliding of the sled runners; the next, the sickening, sinister crack of shattering ice broke the stillness. The sled reared upward, jerking the startled team to an abrupt standstill. Beneath the ice, sinking slowly from the weight of man and sled, the waters ran swiftly and dark. Dean, clinging to the sled with desperation, felt the water creep up his legs halfway to the knees, while its icy chill drove away all sensation after the first shock.

"Steady," he cried sharply; then, "Mush on! Mush on!"

The note of calmness in the ringing cry steadied the team. In unison the dogs settled down and pulled—pulled until each back bowed and each belly touched the ice from the strain, while toes dug for footing and held. The load slipped from the lashings and tumbled toward Dean, the Runt rolling helplessly with the rest. In the brief moment that ice cakes and sled jammed, Dean hurled the Runt clear, tossed a bundle of precious birch bark after him, then leaped himself. The reaction as he leaped broke the jam. The sled, caught by the current, was sucked beneath the ice, pulling the wheelers in with it. For one brief instant the others held, then, as the strain became too great, one gave way, and with him went the others. Dean landed on his hands and knees, his right leg clear; the left, half in the water, cracked against the ragged edge of the break. Something snapped, a sickening pain surged through his body, the world turned red for the briefest moment, then his vision cleared. Once before he had experienced the pain of a broken leg, and now he read the signs rightly. The ice about him was cracking beneath the strain, though here it was thick enough to bear his weight. He crawled clear by a supreme effort. The lead dog alone remained above the surface,

paddling with desperation; then his hind quarters were pulled under, his forepaws splashed an instant longer, then vanished.

The deep, stinging bite of the frost was already at work on Dean's wet feet and legs. Fascinated for an instant, he saw the glaze of ice forming on his moccasins. He had known what would happen the instant the air touched his wet feet. His feet and legs would soon become blocks of ice; then, with that slow assurance with which a glacier moves down a valley, the frost would work up. Breaking through the ice—the tragedy he had escaped so many times—had come at last! And he was alone, except for the pups. The Runt came close and thrust a cold nose forward as if offering sympathy. The others squatted about, their heads cocked at quizzical angles, as if seeking to understand it all.

Never had Dean's need of the assistance of a fellow man been greater. He crawled to the bundle of birch bark, then noticed for the first time that he still retained his whip.

Gripping the bark and whip he commenced to crawl over the ice to shore. Each movement required a special effort to execute. Behind, slowly following, came the pups, the Runt leading.

Even while the frost worked relentlessly upward, Dean managed to force back the terror that leaped again and again into his mind; each movement was made with the calmness and deliberation of desperation. Ages later he reached the shore. To a point where last summer's floods had piled the driftwood high, he made his way.

With his mitted hands he tore at the shattered bits of wood, pulling away slivers and sticks that would blaze up readily, until at last he had a formidable pile.

Hardly breathing, he watched the yellow flame flicker a moment, then burst into a fierce blaze as the bark flared up. It licked the wood so carefully piled above it and spread until the whole mass was ablaze. The lighter stuff would go quickly, but the heavy logs of the tangled mass would burn for hours. And then? With the optimism of those of the North he gratefully accepted even a short lease of life, and commenced the slow task of stirring the circulation in his feet.

With his knife he cut and hacked the moccasins and socks away, until his bare feet were exposed to view, bloodless and strangely white. "It's not so bad," he whispered, "not so bad; if somebody should come along and help me."

The Runt, squatting on his haunches, watched the preliminary process of thawing with snow, his alert eyes following every movement. The other pups, stretched upon the snow, were resting.

The spark of life within Dean had always burned brightly, but it never burned brighter, nor struggled harder, than it did at that moment when the agony of restored circulation commenced to torture his limbs. His great strength and determination had pulled him through so far; but it was maddening, this thought of winning out against the frost by his own efforts only to die of hunger and cold because of his helplessness. With his old dog team standing by, he could have crawled to the sled, wrapped himself in his robes, and the wise old Malemute lead dog would have taken him safely home.

Yes, the old team would have taken him safely home. Some day, when the pups had grown up, they would be trained the same way; but now they were still irresponsible, playful youngsters, the Runt alone displaying hints of the wisdom and leadership of the older dogs. Dean glanced up at the Runt, and when he looked into the little fellow's bright eyes, the answer to his problem came. It was a long chance, but the only one. Perhaps in the

Runt's brain the instinctive knowledge that enables the old dogs to find and follow a snow-covered trail over frozen lake and river had developed sufficiently to meet this emergency successfully. Banking heavily on one natural instinct, Dean would be going up against an even stronger, the inbred instinct that causes a dog to remain with man to the end.

Dean was not one to fear the test. With a sweep of his arm toward the back trail he spoke in a low, sharp tone: "Go back home, Runt!" The Runt's erect ears drooped suddenly; the misery of his soul was pictured in his expressive eyes. The joy of the day was gone forever, yet he hesitated. Something was wrong with this man-god of his who crawled about on his hands and knees, and whose face frequently turned white from pain. The Runt was quite certain his place was here with the man and not at home, miles away. His fellows bestirred themselves and squatted about in a circle, waiting for a move from the Runt. Dean contemplated for a moment the circle of pups, erect ears forming triangles on each side of their quizzical faces, eyes bright and expectant. The Runt alone dropped.

"Go back home!" said Dean again. A new note crept into his tone. Ordinarily, the Runt

would have leaped to obedience, but now he stubbornly stood his ground. His place, he knew, was with the man. Twice more Dean repeated the command, then he reluctantly caught up the whip.

"Go on home!" he shouted for the last time, emphasizing his words with a crack of the whip. "I got to do it!" he groaned.

The lash whistled through the air and cracked like the shot of a pistol; a tuft of soft fur vanished from the Runt's woolly back. In an instant the wolf strain in the Runt's veins leaped to the front. Lips lifted in a snarl, baring baby fangs; his fur bristled in rage, his defiance magnificent. Then the domestic routed the wild, he whined a mute plea and shivered, turned very slowly, and walked away. The others followed silently. On the ridge, a hundred yards distant, he paused and looked back, the others grouped about him. Dean, tears in his eyes, watched the twelve youthful faces a moment, then waved them on. The Runt searched about uncertainly for an instant, then picked up the trail and trotted from view.

Le Mar was up to his old tricks. Like many Alaskans, he had laid up a stock of magazines in consecutive numbers for the long winter. The words "To be continued" at the end of an

instalment never annoyed Le Mar. He merely picked up the next number and continued reading. A thriller had gripped his interest and it was fully two o'clock in the morning; but he continued to read on.

Below, his dogs stirred uneasily, then, without the least apparent reason, one of them howled the mournful, wolfish note of the Malemute. Far in the distance came an answering howl. "Ba Gar!" exclaimed Le Mar. "Those pup!"

The return of the pups could mean but one thing—disaster of some nature had overtaken the older dogs and Dean. The pups would never return of their own accord. He hurriedly put on his clothing, grasped a flashlight, and stepped out. Into the white gleam staggered the Runt. He dropped in his tracks; the others, tails dragging, heads hanging from exhaustion, followed their leader's example. For one brief moment Le Mar regarded the pups as if he expected them to tell the story he sensed, then he drove the tired pack into the cabin and called out his own team and harnessed them to the sled. Onto the sled went plenty of robes, a first-aid kit, provisions, and other articles his experience told him might be of use. Still, the load seemed incomplete. He rubbed his parka

hood with his hand and gazed doubtfully. "Ba Gar!" he exclaimed suddenly, "those Runt!" Le Mar ran back to the cabin and returned with the Runt, whom he tossed on top of the robes.

For this night's run Le Mar replaced the lean collie he used as a lead dog to speed up the team with a wise old Malemute, one that Le Mar declared could find a trail where none existed.

The team, dragging the light load through the night, jerked the driver along at top speed. Sometimes he rode short stretches in order to rest, but usually he gripped the handles of the sled and raced behind. In the gloom, a few feet away, he could make out the form of the Runt, sleeping the slumber of the just.

At seven o'clock, with the dawn of the short day still two hours away, the lead dog stopped and commenced to sniff uncertainly. The trail ended. Le Mar walked ahead cautiously and located the spot where the team had broken through, then shook his head sadly. The hole was frozen over, but the signs of the tragedy were there in plenty.

"Ba Gar!" he whispered softly. "Dean—he—"

The Runt leaped from the sled, gazed about uncertainly for one brief instant, then glanced

up at Le Mar as if to say, "Here! what are you wasting time for?"

"Hey, Runt!" shouted Le Mar excitedly. "What you try tell me, huh?"

But the Runt did not waste words. He located himself at that instant and was away at top speed. Le Mar circled the thin ice and followed. Around the nearest point he caught sight of the glow of charring logs. As he neared, a form straightened up, then into the light leaped the Runt. For an instant he hesitated, gripped by doubt, then, as Dean opened his arms, he threw himself forward, his tail wagging furiously, his cold muzzle thrust against the man's cheek. Dean stifled a groan that came from the sudden movement of his leg and hugged the happy form of the Runt to his breast.

The pup's body shivered with a joy that was boundless, while his loyal little heart pounded ecstatically. Something, he knew not what, told him that he had rendered a signal service, and that this wonderful man-god was grateful. What matter if other pups were harnessed to sleds with the big dogs to make mysterious trips abroad? Never had a dog, large or small, been hugged as the Runt was being hugged at that moment.

Into the light came Le Mar, his parka glistening white with frost. "Ba Gar, those Runt—" he began happily.

"You bet—those Runt!" rejoined Dean brokenly.

"Huh!" grunted Le Mar. Then after a long pause. "Huh! Ba Gar!" And he roughly brushed away a tear with his mitted hand.

ORDERED ON[1]

By John Taintor Foote

I

The wood fire leaped and crackled, and shot small embers out upon the bricks. The embers changed from white to red, from red to gray, from gray to sullen black. Their lives were short. One moment glowing, brilliant — dead smudges on the hearth the next. Dumb-Bell had noticed the embers. His chair had always stood in the bay window across the big room. That day they had moved it nearer the fire. He wondered why.

They had moved the leather-covered stool, too. He blinked down at it. The leather-covered stool had stood, for the past six months, just in front of his chair. He had disliked it at first because it was strange. He disliked strange things that interfered with his habits. It had been his habit, until the last year, to get into his chair by a single easy bound. Then he had found it better to put his forepaws in the chair seat, pull one hind leg up and then the other.

[1]From *Dumb-Bell of Brookfield.* Reprinted by permission of the publishers, D. Appleton & Company.

One day he had hunted quail from a pink dawn to a red eve. They had taken out young Susan Whitstone as his brace mate, who was something of a flibbertigibbet. The perverse creature had insisted on flying to far, dim thickets in her searchings, leaving nearer cover unexplored. It was that way with the young—Dumb-Bell had humored the silly thing, had even been caught up by her infectious, sweeping flights. He had run without restraint, without dignity, without abandon.

Not as he had run in those all-conquering days when his sobriquet was the White Ghost; but he had held the flitting Susan even, for a time, and there was this difference between them: now and then she would flash blithely past a bit of cover, without a thought, without a sign; and then he would come plunging by, weary in heels and heart, but with a champion's nose. One instant he was in his stride, the next moveless, high-headed, tense. Within the thicket, perhaps a hundred feet away, was a breathless huddle of brown feathers and close-held wings!

And then the airy Susan would come creeping back, awed by the splendor of his pose, vaguely troubled by the thought that, flit as she might for all her days, such miracles were not for her.

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Dumb-Bell did not move

That night when Dumb-Bell put his forepaws in the chair his hind legs, for some reason, refused to follow. He had tried to lift them up, his toes scratching on the slippery leather, until his mistress came and helped him into the chair.

Limping in from the garden next day, Dumb-Bell had found the stool before his chair. He waited for some one to move it. No one did, and he decided to climb into the chair despite it. He found the stool was like a step. By using it he could walk right into his chair. He tried it several times to make sure. It worked perfectly every time. From then on he liked the stool.

And now they had moved his chair and his stool nearer the fire. It had seemed a little chilly in the bay window the last few nights. It must be a very cold fall. It was certainly nice and warm here by the fire. And then he could watch the embers.

He was alone with the fire and his thoughts. He could hear a faint murmur of voices coming from the dining room. The people were about the pleasant, glistening table. It might be well to go in there and stand by his mistress. Then, just before Griggs took her plate away, her fork would come stealing down quite quietly with

something delicious on the end. He would be careful not to let his teeth click on the silver tines. Not that it made any difference who heard, but they had done it that way for years.

It had begun when he was always hungry and inclined to beg, and perhaps annoy the guests, and rules had been made. Nowadays he was never very hungry and guests were never annoyed at anything he did. They were, as a matter of fact, quite flattered if he noticed them at all.

Dumb-Bell raised his head from his paws, stirred, and glanced at the door. It was a long way to the dining room, and he was not in the least hungry. He had left three pieces of liver untouched on his plate in the butler's pantry. . . .

He was still watching the embers when the people came in from dinner—his master and mistress and that old man named Parmalee. Dumb-Bell gave the two thumps on the chair seat which hospitality required, and Mr. Parmalee came and scratched him back of the ears.

It was pleasant, this scratching. He closed his eyes. The voices and the snapping of the fire grew fainter and fainter. At last they drifted away altogether, and he was in a queer thicket in which quail rose with a whir at every

step he took but gave no scent, although he tried and tried to smell them. Why, he, Champion Brookfield Dumb-Bell, was flushing birds! It was horrible. He twitched and whined in his sleep.

While he slept the people talked.

"Jim," said Mr. Parmalee, "I've come here this time to tell you something. I've discovered the Happy Hunting Ground. I want to take you there."

The master of Brookfield looked at him inquiringly.

"I not only discovered it, I made it," Mr. Parmalee went on. "No, I can't say that. Come to think of it, the good Lord did most of the work. I just put on the finishing touches. It's in Minnesota."

"Are there quail up there?" asked Gregory doubtfully. "I've understood not. Nothing to speak of, at any rate."

"No, no," said Mr. Parmalee. "Bob White must have his comforts—his corn and his ragweed and his wheat. Some day, perhaps, he'll get there, but not now. The wilderness frightens him. We'll hunt a braver bird, king of them all."

"Ruffed grouse!" said the master of Brookfield quickly.

"Just so," said Mr. Parmalee, and then he explained. He owned, it seemed, a big tract of timberland in northern Minnesota. He coughed slightly as he admitted it—the things he owned embarrassed Mr. Parmalee. He had gone up there last year. He wanted to see the great pines tremble, sway, and crash down before the deep-biting axes and snoring saws of the lumberjacks. He had seen this, and other things. In particular he had seen, or rather heard, the flight of innumerable ruffed grouse getting up before him in the thickets.

It was all but impenetrable cover, much too thick for wing shooting; and yet here was a country filled with the greatest of all game birds. He thought about it for several days. In any direction he pushed his way through second-growth pine, silver birch, alders, and a riot of bushes and vines, a thrilling roar of wings was all about him.

One night he talked with the logging superintendent, who recommended and sent for one Red Harry, log boss extraordinary. He came, a big red man, as thick through the chest as one of the pines he smote, and stood in the doorway. Mr. Parmalee told him what he wanted. Could it be done?

"Sure, anything kin be done; but it 'll cost—"

"That's my part if it," said Mr. Parmalee, who had taken stock of his man and was never embarrassed when it came to large affairs.

Red Harry turned and spat unhurriedly through the doorway. "I'll get a hundred rough-necks from Brainerd. You want some of the stuff left standin', an' brush-heaps made every little bit. Have I got you right?"

"Exactly. If you thin it too much the birds will leave, and they like brush-heaps."

"Twenty square miles?"

"All set," said Red Harry, and slouched into the night.

The master and mistress of Brookfield listened to further deeds of Red Harry and his rough-necks. The eyes of the mistress of Brookfield widened at this wholesale conversion of the wilderness into a shooting preserve.

"And so," Mr. Parmalee wound up, "the Happy Hunting Ground is ready." He turned to his hostess. "I hoped you would come, too. It will be a little rough, but—"

"I'd love it," said Mrs. Gregory. "And Jim will go quite mad."

"The trouble is," said Gregory, "I haven't a dog that will do. My stuff is all too fast for grouse. I'll talk to Peter tomorrow, though, and see what he's got."

But Peter tilted his hat over one eye and scratched the back of his head when asked, next morning, to produce a grouse dog. He let his eye rove down the line of runways and back to the master of Brookfield. A grouse dog must be a plodding, creeping, silent worker. A field trial kennel was not the place to look for one.

"Ole Jane Aus'in, now, might do," said Peter at last. "She always was sly-like, an' what with age an' one thing an' other she might stay around where you could get a look at her now and then.

"The Beau 'imself might do. 'E's slowed down to nothin' an' 'e's got a grand nose, but 'is rheumatism 'as been so bad 'ere lately 'e can't 'ardly get out of 'is kennel."

The master of Brookfield got out his cigarette case and seated himself on the kennel-house doorstep. There followed a gloomy silence. It was broken by Peter at last.

"What about '*im?*" he inquired, nodding toward the house. "With all the brains an' all the nose in the world, an' 'is speed gone from 'im. Take 'im with you there, an' if 'e flushes a single bird, once 'e knows what they're like, you can 'ave my wages for a year."

"I believe you're right," said the master of Brookfield. "It's queer I didn't think of it.

And, yet, when you consider everything—" He broke off, overwhelmed by visions of the past in which a white speck swept distant horizons while horsemen cursed him lovingly and galloped after.

"It's funny now, ain't it?" said Peter. "'Untin' grouse with 'im. Lord save us!"

II

The pines had done it. At first Dumb-Bell had suspected the loons which laughed wildly from somewhere out on the black mystery of the lake. But it wasn't the loons; they, at least, were alive. It was the pines, the brooding pines—and the silence. Always before, wherever he had gone, there had been noises, reassuring noises. Early in the morning, like this, birds should chirp and roosters crow. Dogs give tongue and cattle rumble a greeting to the dawn. Horses might nicker and stamp. Sheep quaver to one another. And, best of all, there would be human voices, or a laugh, or a song, or a whistle. And the trees, where these things happened, rustled comfortably and seemed to take an interest.

All this was very far away and Dumb-Bell had the shivers, and the pines had done it. He had heard them all night. When the wind

blew, the pines made a noise. He did not like that noise. The silence in which, no matter how hard he listened, nothing could be heard was almost better.

Although the kitchen fire was banked and he lay on a shooting coat close to the stove, he had begun to shiver as the noise went on. He had hoped that when it stopped he would stop shivering, but the wind had died out and the noise had stopped, and still he shivered. He could see the pines now through the cabin window, black and still against the sky, plainer every minute as the light grew. So many of them! There were a few pines at Brookfield. There had been a lot of them on one side of the course when he won the Continental. He had not shivered at them then. He had just run, with hundreds of men watching, and smashed into his bevy finds and gone on, while the men yelled.

But the pines down there were smaller and not so black and proud, and he had been wild with excitement, for of course he was winning; he always won, and he knew the men would crowd about him later and talk about him in hushed voices while he pretended not to hear what they said.

There had been so many people that day!

Here there were so few — his master and mistress and Mr. Parmalee and the cook man. That was all. And millions of pines. Dumb-Bell shivered and watched them through the window, his head between his paws.

They called this place the Happy Hunting Ground; but Dumb-Bell was not happy as he lay there, although he had hunted every day since they came.

Of course it was not in the least like quail hunting — nothing was like that! You went as fast as you could when you hunted quail, and saw the country for miles and miles. It was glorious!

But they wouldn't let him do that any more, and these new birds were interesting. You must go very quietly, and at the first faint scent slow to a walk and then to a creep and then to a crawl, until something told you you could go no farther.

Dumb-Bell had flushed two grouse that first day before he had understood how they would burst out of the cover and roar off when he was fifty feet away. His master had said "Steady" to him reproachfully, and Dumb-Bell had grinned in an agony of remorse. After that no more birds were flushed. He just crept about and found them in every direction, while

his mistress called him silly names and even hugged him, now and then, when he came back with the dead bird unruffled in his mouth.

He had disapproved of this hugging business. He was hunting, and even though he went slowly and was stiff for some reason, when night came he was still Champion Brookfield Dumb-Bell at his work, and not a precious lamb.

This was the dawn of their last day in the Happy Hunting Ground. Some of the things were packed already. The wagons would come tomorrow; and Dumb-Bell was glad.

The wagons would take them for miles through the pines. But the train would come along, and after while the pines would not stand in towering ranks on both sides of the track, and he would stop shivering.

He lay and watched the pines until the cook man came and gave the stove its breakfast. Dumb-Bell wondered why it always ate wood instead of the good-smelling things that were put on top of it.

Presently his mistress called good morning to Mr. Parmalee and came into the kitchen, and the last day in the Happy Hunting Ground had begun.

His mistress stayed at the cabin that day to

finish packing, and he and his master and Mr. Parmalee started out. As they were leaving, his mistress gave him a hug and felt him shiver, and thought he was cold.

But his master said, "He'll warm up when he gets to moving. Won't you, old snoozer?"

Dumb-Bell grinned, and galloped stiffly to a small thicket. He skirted it with care to show that he was ready. . . . It was much better to hunt and forget the pines.

He did forget them all morning long. Early in the day his master made a wonderful double, both of them cross-shots, and soon after that Dumb-Bell pointed a live bird a long way off, with a dead bird in his mouth, and Mr. Parmalee — well, it wasn't exactly hugging, but it was near it.

They ate lunch in a small clearing where the low gray sky seemed to rest on the tops of the pine trees. Dumb-Bell ate his two sandwiches slowly, and stared at it.

There was something about the sky he did not like. As he watched it the shivers came back, and he was glad when lunch was over and he would go to work again.

Lake in the afternoon, although he was working as hard as he could, he began to shiver worse than ever, and suddenly he knew. . . .

It was not the pines that had made him shiver! It was something else. It was something that was coming. It would be here soon now. It had been coming all night. The pines had been telling him. Why, perhaps they were not so proud, so aloof, as they had seemed! Perhaps they really cared like the friendly trees at Brookfield.

This thing that was coming was in the sky; in the gray sky that was growing dark now— and the pines were beginning to talk about it again.

Dumb-Bell stopped hunting, and stared into the north. As he stared his eyes changed, his soft, kindly, setter eyes. They filled with green lights. Those from which he sprang, centuries and centuries before, had fled and died before this thing, coming out of the north, and the sleeping wolf within him was awake and was afraid.

"Getting pretty dark, isn't it?" said the master of Brookfield. "Let's hunt this piece out and break for camp. We're going to have a storm, I think. Dumb-Bell! Go on, old man!"

At the words Dumb-Bell turned. Rebellion was in his heart. He would not go on. He would put his tail between his legs and run.

He would run to where the stove was that ate wood.

This tall man, who said "Go on," who was he? Dumb-Bell looked at him wildly, and their eyes met . . . . Dumb-Bell grinned, whined, and started — not for the stove and safety; he went carefully toward a distant brush-heap. There might be a grouse in there, and the tall man, his man, in the old tan shooting coat which he had slept on so many times, had ordered him to find it.

Yes, there was a grouse in the brush-heap. Dumb-Bell slowed to a creep and then to a crawl, until something told him he could go no farther. Then he stopped, his eyes no longer green and shifting. They were warm, faithful, eager — the eyes of Champion Brookfield Dumb-Bell on point.

And then, with one last wailing shriek from the pines, the thing that had been coming, that had made him shiver so, was there. Dumb-Bell did not move. His fear, the fear of slinking ancestors, was gone. What if there was a roar that deafened him? What if it was as dark as night? What if he could scarcely breathe for the smothering ice particles that stung his muzzle and filled his eyes and his nostrils? The years had thinned his blood and stiffened

his limbs, but his nose, which was his soul, they could not touch. It was the nose of a champion still, and wind and dark and snow could not prevail against it—there was a grouse in the brush-heap!

A blizzard was a terrible thing. The pines had moaned all night about it. It was here now, roaring and biting, all but lifting him off his feet. Still—there was a grouse in the brush-heap! You couldn't change that!

The wind was the worst. It was so hard to hold himself erect, and he must do that, whatever happened. He was on point, and champions pointed with a high head and a level tail.

If he moved, the grouse would flush, and he never flushed birds. Why, long ago, when he was a tiny puppy and they called him the Runt and were ashamed of him, he never flushed birds. He had pointed sparrows when they kept him alone day after day in the runway. Of course no one knew he was pointing and no one came to flush the sparrows. They would hop about in the runway for a long time. So long that his legs would begin to tremble and his back would ache, and some one should have come; but no one ever did.

It was like that now, only worse. The wind was so cold. The winds were all much colder,

lately. This one seemed to cut right into his chest as he held his head high against it. His hind legs were going back on him, too. They were beginning to let him down a little. He must straighten up somehow.

Why didn't they come? He was so cold, so very cold. If he could change his position it would help his legs. They felt numb and queer. He felt queer all over. But there was a grouse in the brush-heap! They would come and flush it soon, now.

They had better hurry. He could not hold his head up much longer. It was not the wind; the wind was growing warmer, almost like summer, but he was sleepy. That was queer. He had never felt sleepy on point before. But then he had worked hard today and he had not slept well last night because of the shivers. He would sleep better tonight, much better. Why, he could go to sleep this minute! The wind wouldn't hurt him. The wind was his friend. It had blown the snow all over him, and it was nice warm snow. It packed itself under his chest. He could even rest a little weight on it and help his legs.

But they were gone away, his legs; back to Brookfield, perhaps. He must go, too, back to Brookfield. It was bright and cheerful there.

And always there were sounds that he knew, nice sounds — not like the pines and the loons.

He would come to the big gates first and then he would leave the drive and cut across the lawn toward the lights of the house shining through the trees. He would scratch on the front door and some one would let him in, and Peter would be glad to see him, and so would his chair, his own chair near the fire. And then — *But there was a grouse in the brush-heap!* He had almost forgotten. . . . No he couldn't leave just now. He must stay a little longer, alone in the dark in the nice warm snow.

The snow was getting higher about him all the time. Perhaps it would cover him up after while. He was not very big. They had called him the Runt long ago. . . . He had never flushed birds though, even then. And now, although his master called him old snoozer, he was Champion Brookfield Dumb-Bell, with his picture in the papers, and there was a grouse in the brush-heap! A grouse — in — the — brush — heap. . . .

III

The mistress of Brookfield raised her gun. "All ready, Tom," she said.

The cook put his shoulder to the door and let it swing open a scant foot. There was a

whistling shriek, the room was filled with a vortex of snow, both lamps went out, and the cook threw his weight against the door until the latch clicked in its socket. It was done in five seconds, practice had made him perfect; but a tongue of flame had leaped out of the door as the twelve-gauge spoke in an abrupt yelp that just managed to rise above the voice of the storm.

The cook lit the lamps again. Mrs. Gregory dropped the gun butt to the floor and felt the muscles of her right arm. She was shooting three and a quarter drams of nitro. Her own little twenty-gauge could not have been heard to the edge of the clearing. Her arm and shoulder were bruised to a throbbing ache.

She stood at the door listening for a time, then she broke the gun and slipped a shell in the right barrel. "All ready, Tom?"

"Yes, ma'am."

This time the heavy charge made her stagger and forced an "Oh!" of pain through her clenched teeth.

The cook reached for the gun. "You can't do that no more," he said. "It'll tear the arm off of you."

"I must," she said. "I can't hold the door. If the lamp blows over again it might explode."

"I'll hold her or bust a lung," said the cook, "an' shoot with one hand."

Mrs. Gregory drew the gun away and gave the cook a white smile. "You're a good man," she said with a nod. "When this is over you must come back with us to — What was that?"

The cook listened intently. He heard what he had heard for the past hour, the shriek of the wind and the rattle of ice particles against the window.

But the mistress of Brookfield was a woman, and women listen with more than ears.

"Open the door!" she cried. "Quick, quick!"

The cook obeyed. For an instant the lamplight cut a yellow square a few yards into the blackness before the door. It was filled with a myriad of particles of hissing snow. These gave place to a staggering figure that carried another figure in its arms. Then the lamps blew out again.

When they were lighted a man of ice stood in the room. He crackled and tinkled when he moved, but he had the voice of the master of Brookfield.

"Glad you fired," he croaked. "I'd been hoping you would." He looked down at the quiet figure he carried. "Come and get him, Tom. I can't unbend my arms."

The mistress of Brookfield did not explain that she had been firing for an hour or more. She flew to the medicine case, then to the kitchen, then back with a steaming kettle. It was not until Mr. Parmalee stirred beneath the blankets a few moments later, then opened his eyes and muttered her name, that she flew to the master of Brookfield and asked a question.

"Where," she said, "is Dumb-Bell?"

The master of Brookfield sat in an unheated room with his hands in a dishpan filled with snow. His face despite him was twisted with pain. But the pain in his eyes as she met them was not physical. It was deeper and more lasting than the small agony of frozen fingers.

"I ordered him on," he said, "just before it hit us. I looked as long as I dared, and fired and whistled. I thought he'd come back here."

"Oh!" she said, with a sudden intaking of the breath. She returned to the main room and picked up the twelve-gauge. She picked the cook up bodily with her eyes and set him at the door, daring him with the same look to mention her arm and shoulder.

"All ready, Tom," she said. "He'll come to the gun if he hears it."

She fired until her blue-black arm refused to lift the twelve-gauge any longer. Then she took a camp stool close to the door and sat there, waiting—listening for a whine or a scratch that never came.

When a grayness appeared at the windows at last the outside world was still in a shrieking, whirling frenzy. But an hour later the storm swept away to the south as abruptly as it had come, and a red sun was climbing a salmon sky above the snow-bowed pines.

Beneath the pines the drifted snow was blue, but in the clearings it was a dazzling, shimmering pink which crept up the pines themselves, changing them to lavender plumes filled with violet shadows.

Not a breath of wind remained. The pines were only painted on a painted sky. The pink snow, too, was painted. The whole wilderness had become unreal. It was too scenic, too theatrical to be true. It might have been a setting for a drama of the gods, and Mrs. Gregory gasped as she stepped into it.

"Jim," she said, "this isn't the world, is it? There never were such colors in the world before."

The master of Brookfield squinted at the blushing snow, the unbelievable sky, and the

still miracle of the pines with their impossible shadows.

"Why, no," he said, at last, "'t isn't the world. It's —the Happy Hunting Ground, don't you remember?"

At this she looked at him.

"Ah, little Chief!" he said. And one of his bandaged hands fumbled for one of hers, and found it, and so they set out with Tom ahead breaking trail and Mr. Parmalee waving feebly from the doorway.

They floundered on, peering into thickets, eying small mounds of snow fearfully but passing them without examination. They would not admit, just yet, that one of those innocent mounds could have a dreadful secret. Now and then Tom would fire into the air. And they would stop and listen to the echoes of the shot crashing among the pines. They called, of course, and the master of Brookfield whistled, but the clearings were filled with snow and sunlight and the thickets with snow and shadows, and that was all.

At last they found something. It was a gun, standing against a tree.

"It's mine," said Gregory. "Now I know where I am."

He broke open the gun, took out the shells

and blew the snow from the barrels. He slipped the shells into the breach automatically, closed the gun, and looked about him.

"We were standing in the middle of that clearing," he said pointing, "and I ordered him on. He went toward the farther end—that's north, isn't it, Tom?—and then it hit us, and I never saw him after that. Chief, you stand here to give us our bearings and we'll make a circle around you. You go one way, Tom, and I'll go the other. We'll make the first circle to take in the edge of the clearing and widen for the next when we meet."

The mistress of Brookfield stood and watched them go. Somehow it was a comfort to be here where the mannie had been. His blessed paws must have pattered by close to where she was standing. She knew exactly how he looked when he went by. He would be so earnest, so intent. He seemed to take on a remoteness when at work that shut her away almost completely from him. It was almost a sacrilege to hug him when he had to come in with a dead bird and could not avoid her. But who could help it when he looked like that, so proud and important?

If she had only been here yesterday. If she only had! If it were only now, this minute,

that he was passing and she could call his name and see by the flicker of his eye that he heard!

She tried it. "Dumb-Bell!" she said softly. "Mannie! Oh, mannie!" . . . . She could not see whether he passed or not. She could see nothing until she found a handkerchief in her sweater pocket.

Then, when she could see again, her heart stopped beating, for Tom was waving to her and calling, and she ran toward him floundering, stumbling, falling in the snow.

When she had crossed the clearing and saw what Tom was looking at she gave a cry of thankfulness and joy. . . . There was the mannie—alive! He was standing deep in the snow. He was pointing with a high head and a level tail as he always did.

And then, she saw a look of amazement in Tom's face. She came closer, and the light left her eyes as she sank down on a log and covered them with her hands. . . . She did not move, when the master of Brookfield came and stood beside her.

Dumb-Bell was in a small glade, just beyond the shadow of a great black pine. He seemed to be carved in silver, for the sunlight flashed and twinkled on the sheath of ice which covered

him from the tip of his outstretched nose to the tip of his outstretched tail. And if the ice had been enduring silver, the perfection, the certainty of his pose, could have served as a model for all the champions yet to come.

They watched him for awed moments in a vast silence. And then the silence was broken. From a white mound at which he pointed there came a sound, a scratching flutter.

The white mound, once a refuge, was now an icy prison. Its occupant was pecking and fluttering to be free. There was a grouse in the brush-heap!

"Good God!" exclaimed Gregory, and then, "Let him out, Tom; kick the snow away!"

But the mistress of Brookfield put her hand on his arm. "No, no!" she said, "no, no! He's held it for you all this dreadful night—in this horrible land where he doesn't belong—my mannie, my own little mannie!"

"I see," said Gregory. "Good girl!" He waded to the white mound, kicked the snow away, and swung his foot against the pile of brush, the ice tinkling in the dead branches.

The brush-heap shivered. There was a drumming of wings, a shower of snow, and a big cock grouse shot for the blue above the pines. There was a staccato crash, a pungent breath of nitro

powder, and still he went, like a bronze rocket, straight for that bit of sky.

The master of Brookfield winked the dimness from his eyes and set his jaw. The grouse topped the pines in a flashing curve. He was gone! No, not quite. He had spread his wings for his sail over the tree tops when he crumpled suddenly in the air.

The master of Brookfield broke open his smoking gun and looked at the small white statue, banked in snow.

"Dead bird!" he said. "Dead bird, old snoozer!"

But Champion Brookfield Dumb-Bell gave no sign that he heard. He could no longer stoop to a ruffed grouse lying in the snow. His spirit was sweeping like the wind over Elysian Fields and flashing into point after point on celestial quail.

DRAFTED[1]

THE STORY OF A SMALL BOY AND HIS DOG

By Vesta Tharp

Buddy Hopkins stood on the rickety front steps of the little house where he lived, and tried to make out what was going on in the next block. The performance was so puzzling that he decided to go down and investigate, but on the way to the gate he turned back and puckered his lips into a peremptory whistle.

Nothing happened.

Nothing ever did happen when he whistled for Spot; so, as usual, he went back and peered under the steps. Sure enough! there was the delinquent, ardently Fletcherizing an old shoe, over which he regarded his master with affectionate interest.

"Didn't you hear me whistle?" exclaimed Buddy. "What kind of a dog are you anyway?"

The question was almost an indelicate one, for when Spot had been dragged into the open, it was apparent that his genealogy was—well, rather complicated. He wasn't exactly a

[1]Reprinted by permission of the author from the *American Magazine*.

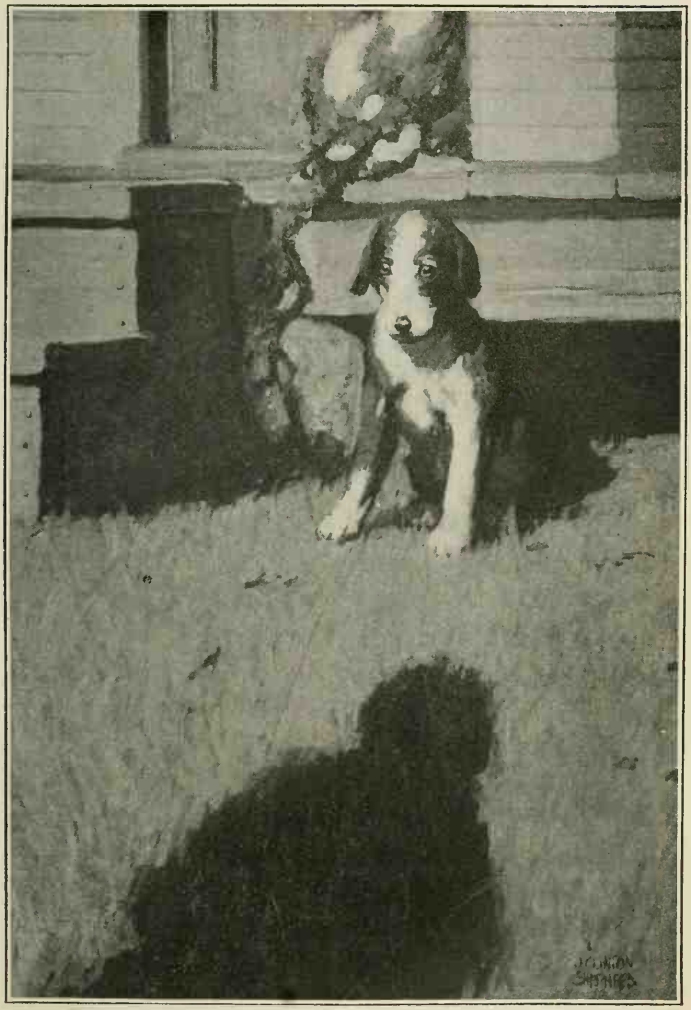
spaniel, and he wasn't exactly a—But never mind that! There was one thing he decidedly *was;* he was the puppiest puppy dog that ever waggled a tail, or blundered about on impossibly big feet, or looked at a boy out of soft, adoring eyes. That was the way he looked at Buddy now; and the boy returned the look in kind as the two young things started for the gate in an inextricable confusion of bare feet and black-and-white paws.

It was not until they reached the cluttered and unkempt front yard of the Bean cottage that Buddy discovered what was happening there. Under the masterful direction of Lizzie Bean five children were digging a hole in one corner. Lizzie, who by age and temperament was the dominating spirit of the neighborhood, wiped the beads of honest toil from her brow and hastened to explain.

"Hello, Buddy!" she said. "We're diggin' a coal mine. Teacher told us all about it last winter. You just dig an' dig till you come to the coal—an' there you are! We'll get to it before winter an' then we'll have it right handy here, 'stead of havin' to pick it up along the tracks."

"Gee!" said Buddy. "It's great!"

Lizzie handed up an old tin pail full of dirt to Charlie Stevens, who, with great importance,



Spot was the puppiest puppy dog that ever waggled a tail

lugged it out to the street. Jimmy Rand bent to his task of wielding a broken stove shovel. Thomas Jefferson Johnson, whose color matched his name, pushed his soap-box wagon up for Jimmy to fill.

Out in the road, Joey Bean and bowlegged Willie Bean were posted to shovel the dirt into the ditch. Over by the sagging porch, Violet Alice Bean, aged three, sat on the ground scraping out her own private coal mine with a battered tin spoon. Buddy beheld these activities with growing excitement.

"We're helpin' Uncle Sam, too!" observed Lizzie. "Y'see, gettin' our own coal will leave that much more for other folks. Ain't it a wonder nobody thought of it before I did?"

"You bet!" said Buddy. "I'll help you. I'm an awful good digger, I am." And he laid hold of another battered shovel and started for the hole. At its brink he stopped short with the shock of a sudden inspiration.

"Gee!" he exclaimed, "Spot kin help, too! Just give him sumpin' to bury an' he kin dig like anything."

Lizzie hesitated. There was also impressive cessation of work on the part of Jimmy Rand; and T. J. Johnson dug his black toes into the ground and looked the other way.

"S-say—listen here, Bud!" said Lizzie. "Y'see this coal-minin' we're doin' ain't no common job. Y'see, we're a kind of a club."

"Yep," put in Charlie Stevens. "This is the 'Army Folks Club.'"

"Ain't you got somebody in the army, kid?" demanded Jimmy. "If you have you can pitch in! But if you ain't, you gotta git out; 'cause them's the rules. You gotta have a Sammy in the army or you can't get into the club."

Buddy's pinched little face went suddenly pale under its streaks of dirt and the shovel slipped from his nerveless grasp. Yes, he knew about their folks. The Bean children had an uncle in France. Charlie Stevens' brother had run away and enlisted. Jimmy's two brothers were with Company G; and even Thomas Jefferson could boast of military connections, for his cousin was in the draft. Buddy gulped hard.

"If a feller's mother's got killed—and he ain't never had nobody but just an old grandmother an' grandpop—how *kin* he have folks in the army?"

He was interrupted by a howl from Violet Alice, and the children turned to behold her eclipsed by a kaleidoscopic effect in black and white, which experience enabled them to identify as Spot. Out of the fullness of his loving puppy

heart he was insisting on licking her chubby face. Sister Lizzie's indignation had the fierceness of the maternal instinct.

"Take your dog off'n my sister, Buddy Hopkins!" she shrieked.

"Aw, he ain't hurtin' her!" said Buddy; but he moved over to the point of disturbance and captured the active section of it.

Then the two little figures trailed dejectedly out of the yard.

Every day for a week the Army Folks Club labored with more or less spasmodic intensity. And every day Buddy and Spot, driven to an exclusive enjoyment of each other's society, became more dependent on this companionship.

Perhaps there is no love more enthralling than that which a boy gives to his first dog—unless it is the devotion with which a puppy requites his first master. And in Buddy's case this warm and wonderful exchange was almost the boy's whole heart-life.

His grandmother had never loved him. Her daughter's child had been a bitter legacy to her. His grandfather really did care for him; but the shadow of Mrs. Hopkins' antagonism fell always between the two, keeping their affection for each other an unexpressed emotion which left the boy's heart-hunger unsatisfied.

So on his dog he lavished all the riches of his childish soul. Instead of a mother's kisses, the puppy's little pink tongue dried his tears that first night when he cried himself to sleep over the coal mine incident. Instead of putting his arms around a motherly neck and sobbing out his troubles, he hugged his dog and found comfort and appeasement in the struggles of the wriggling little body to convey a perfect passion of affection. *His* dog! The one being in the world that adored him.

After his rebuff by the Army Folks, Buddy avoided the Bean neighborhood with bitter dignity. But on the last day of that eventful week his curiosity overcame his deeper emotions and, accompanied as usual by Spot, he strolled down in that direction. The club was performing its duties rather perfunctorily by this time, so everybody was unfeignedly glad to resume friendly relations with a former esteemed contemporary like Buddy. This prevailing good feeling might have led to his becoming a nondescript member of the club, if something quite unexpected had not happened.

It was Lizzie, of course, that silenced the group with a commanding gesture, so that they heard from somewhere in the distance the muffled, measured tread of scores of marching

feet. With a wild shout of joy, the War Folks cast aside their shovels and started for the gate. Down the street they tore, Willie Bean, whose personal architecture was a decided handicap, bringing up the rear.

"It's the soldiers from the train," shouted Charlie. "Come on! The Sammies are goin' up Main Street!"

On they ran. Breathless and purple and panting they came to where long lines of husky boys, from the great Middle West, were singing their way through crowds that cheered, that waved and smiled, and sometimes sighed, as they went swinging by.

Eager, excited, the Army Folks chased feverishly along beside the troops, who were having this bit of exercise after hours of railroad travel, and who sang as they marched a song which ran:

> He was just a long, lean country gink
> From 'way out West where the hoptoads wink;
> He was six feet two in his stocking feet,
> And kept gettin' thinner the more he'd eat!

"Hello, kids!" called the soldiers.

And just at that moment, when the struggling little group was thus brought into the limelight of public attention, Spot, cavorting madly along in an intoxication of joy and gladness, perceived

what appeared to him to be a good opening and attempted to negotiate it. Of course Willie Bean's architecture would have encouraged any puppy to try this same stunt; for, as previously remarked, Willie's legs were unmistakably suggestive of a pair of parentheses. But the result was that Willie was catapulted into a sergeant and that Spot monopolized the attention of the entire company for a few hectic moments.

Probably this fact was responsible for what happened after the troops had returned to their train, escorted by a large part of the town's population, including Lizzie and her satellites. Leaning from the windows, the soldiers suddenly recognized Spot with shouts of joy.

"Hey, kid! What's the pup's name?"

Buddy never knew just why he answered as he looked up into the laughing faces—he didn't say "Spot" at all! What he piped, in his funny treble voice, was—

"Sammy!"

"Hand him up here and let him get next to the real thing!" called the very sergeant that had been catapulted by Willie.

Buddy, entranced by this attention, lifted the wriggling form up to the sergeant's long arms and delightedly watched the hilarious reception of His Dog by these heroes of the

imagination, while from the windows of the train rolled waves of melody:

But he was brave as he was thin,
When the war broke out, he got right in,
Unhitched the mule, put the plow away;
And then the old folks heard him say:

"Good-by, Ma, good-by, Pa,
Good-by, mule, with your old hee-haw!
I may not know what the war's about,
But you bet, by gosh, I'll soon find out."

Buddy, his lips parted in an ecstasy of excitement, did not notice that the signal had been given and the train was creeping ahead.

And, oh! my sweetheart, don't you fear!
I'll bring you a king for a souvenir.
I'll get you a Turk and a Kaiser, too.
And that's about all one fellow can do.

Faster and faster went the train, its windows crowded with laughing faces, while from car windows and station platform came a medley of cheers and good-bys. Lizzie Bean waved her long arms and cheered shrilly. The other members of the Army Folks did likewise. And then, quite suddenly, they fell silent, staring, open mouthed, at a familiar little figure which was running, running, his bare legs flying in a futile pursuit of the now swiftly moving train.

As they watched, they saw him stop despairingly and throw himself on the ground, face downward.

"It's Buddy!" they exclaimed.

Lizzie looked around her sharply.

"Gee!" she said. "They've gone *off* with his *dog!*"

The crowd on the platform melted away. Only the club members had noticed the small boy, face down in the cinders along the track, and they approached him with embarrassed offers of sympathy.

"Come on, Buddy!" coaxed Charlie. "Spot'll git home all right. They'll let him out down the track."

"Come along, Bud!" urged Lizzie; and with supreme generosity she added: "Come on and we'll let you help dig. I guess we'll probably find coal *this afternoon.*"

The stricken Buddy picked himself up and followed them silently until they reached the Bean gate, then, with a shake of the head, he went on home.

After supper he went out to the gate and waited, peering through the gathering dusk, his ears strained to hear the patter of racing feet. When he went up to the low attic where he slept, his grandfather followed him.

"What's the matter, Buddy?" the old man asked with awkward tenderness.

Buddy buried his head in the pillows.

"Can't you tell your old gran'daddy?"

"They—took—*my* dog!" sobbed the boy.

"*Who* took your dog? If any o' them kids is pesterin' you, your gran'daddy'll 'tend to 'em!"

"The—the soldiers—took him! They took him—off—on the cars."

"Gosh!" said the old man. "How'd they git your dog?" he demanded; and when Buddy, between his sobs, had explained the matter, he patted the shaking shoulders and tried to offer consolation.

"Never mind, sonny!" he said. "Never mind! Tell you, what I'll do. I'll git you another dog! I seen one today. He's a reg'lar dog, this one is. Spot wa'n't nothin' but a pup, anyway. This here one is a real dog."

Buddy tried to respond, but gave it up.

"I don't want no real dog," he sobbed. "I just want—my puppy!"

Day after day Buddy waited, nursing a hope which grew fainter and fainter. One evening, when his grandfather came to supper, the child was in the woodshed getting chips for the kitchen stove and the old man peered in, his eyes alight, his hands behind his back.

"What d'you guess I've brought you, sonny?" he said mysteriously.

Buddy looked up and a sudden radiance flooded his face.

"My—dog!" he cried.

"Yep," the old man said persuasively, "I've brought you the nicest little puppy you ever seen." And he produced a wriggling little bunch and held it out with a gesture he tried to make confident. But all the swift joy faded from the boy's eyes and, after one glance at the proffered substitute—the "something just as good" as the one and only thing he wanted—he turned away.

"It's awful good of you, Grandpop, but"—his voice broke—"I—I don't want nothin' but my *own dog!*"

The old man helplessly regarded the little creature in his hands.

"I thought mebbe you'd like him," he said, "but I kin take him back."

He started to the house, but hesitated, and taking out of his pocket a shabby purse he slowly extracted a half-dollar from its sparse contents.

"Here, sonny," he said. "Don't say nothin' to your grandmother; but here's a half-dollar. You light out after supper an' take the kids to the movies."

But the boy was still sobbing, and did not even look up.

"Buddy, quit!" quavered the old man. "Take it, an' go to the show—like a good kid!"

His shaking fingers pushed the money into Buddy's hands, and the boy looked up to see the wrinkled and weatherbeaten old face twitching painfully. Grandpop was crying! The child's sobs were hushed by the wonder of that sight, and he suddenly threw his arms around the old man's neck.

"I'll be good! It—it'll be fine, Grandpop!" he declared bravely.

An hour later the entire membership of the Army Folks Club, escorted by the rank outsider, Buddy, sat in the second row of the Empire Moving Picture Palace and prepared for two hours of bliss.

First there was a fire in New Jersey; then the wreck of a freight train, an aëroplane flight, the inevitable picture of soldiers training, and finally a great parade of troops at Camp Dodge in their own state.

Here was something doing! As the lines of soldiers swung along, the audience clapped and cheered and the second row spectators sat eagerly forward. All except Buddy! Temporarily he had forgotten his grief, but now these

lines of marching men brought back his sense of loss and loneliness, and he saw the screen through a blinding mist of tears. Surreptitiously he put up his grimy little hand to wipe them away, when suddenly he felt a violent poke which almost sent him out of his seat.

"Look!" shrieked Lizzie. "Buddy—look!"

Dashing his tears away, Buddy did look, and there beheld cavorting awkwardly beside a sergeant—whose face was stamped on Buddy's memory—the unmistakable figure of a black-and-white puppy dog! On he came, straight toward the front of the picture; straight, so it seemed to the breathless boy in the second row, to the arms which he held out with an inarticulate cry. And then, in that mysterious way peculiar to moving pictures, Spot, with a final wag of his tail, vanished from the screen, and Buddy's empty arms fell back hopelessly.

His grandfather was sitting on the steps when Buddy came home in the grip of renewed sorrow; and after the boy had told what happened and had crept up to bed the old man stayed there a long time, his pipe held between his teeth with unwonted determination. He was very gentle with Buddy in the days that followed, and a secret understanding grew and deepened between them. But, for all that, the boy's

heart ached with loneliness. The Army Folks Club now regarded him as quite a figure of romance and the invitation to join in the coal mining operation had been renewed with great cordiality. Buddy tried to respond, but he was subject to sudden attacks of emotion which would send him flying home to the haven of the woodshed.

One afternoon, he heard his grandmother's shrill tones. Buddy wondered vaguely who could be the object of her wrath, and at the sound of footsteps he shrank back into the darkest corner.

And then the miracle happened! For, reaching in through the door, his grandfather's big rough hands set down a tumultuous something in black and white that flung itself upon him and fairly devoured him in an insatiable yearning to get closer than the immutable laws of matter would permit.

When at last, half suffocated with joy and with puppy caresses, Buddy looked up at the old face, smiling down at him, he could only smile back, dumb with happiness. His grandfather sat down on the chopping block and, drawing a paper from his pocket, put on his spectacles with hands which trembled.

"Guess you didn't think your old gran'daddy

had much sense anyway, did you?" he demanded with ill-concealed pride. "Guess you didn't think he'd have gumption enough to write to Camp Dodge an' tell the hull United States Army about his boy's pup, did you? Well, that's what he had. An' sure enough the U. S. A. done just what I asked 'em to. They sent your pup back by express this afternoon an'—an' I just knocked off work—it's kind o' warm workin' today, anyhow!—and brung him home soon's he got here."

Buddy was still dumb. He silently hugged the wriggling bunch of love in his arms; but he looked volumes.

"I *will* say," proceeded his grandfather, "they done the thing up brown. Listen here to what they sent with—with Sammy."

Buddy's eyes widened at the name—but he kept on saying nothing. His grandfather, smoothing out the paper, motioned him to come and read. It was a very important looking document which stated in flawless official language that an Honorable Discharge had been granted to one "Sammy Hopkins, of Company A, Tenth Regiment," of the National Army! Buddy spelled it out, word by word. Then he read it again, and finally he looked up into the beaming face above him, suddenly printed a

fierce kiss on the wrinkled cheek, snatched the paper from the threadbare knee where it was spread, and dashed out of the door. Spot—that is to say, Sammy—escaped from his arms and the two raced through the yard, out the front gate, down the street, and irrupted startlingly into the midst of the somewhat languid War Folks Club. Arrived at his great moment, Buddy controlled himself by a violent effort of the will and interrupted the storm of excitement which greeted the reappearance of Sp—that is, Sammy.

"Read that!" he said grandiloquently. And he presented the Honorable Discharge.

"Gosh!" said the combined masculine membership of the Army Folks Club, when the contents of the document had been digested.

But the female of the species, who always goes the male one better, gathered herself together, considered the situation for a moment, and, in the person of Dictator Lizzie, pronounced these remarkable words: "You can git into the Army Folks now all right, Buddy Hopkins. An', what's more, you've got the only soldier what's ackchully been in the army an' has come back onnerbly dish-charged. So what I say is that we gotta make Sp—Sammy the president o' this here club. An' what I say, goes."

BROWN WOLF[1]

By Jack London

Footsore and famished, Brown Wolf drifted in mysteriously out of nowhere to the little mountain cottage of Walt and Madge Irvine in California. The dog ran away —always toward the north—whenever Walt Irvine untied him. Each time, Brown Wolf was captured and brought back. After a futile year of flight, he accepted the inevitable and decided to remain with the Irvines. Even after this decision, a long time elapsed before either Walt or Madge Irvine could win his friendship. Then, Skiff Miller of the Klondike stopped one day at the Irvines' on his way to his sister's cottage.

"We'd like to hear you tell about the Klondike," Madge said. "Mayn't we come over some day while you are at your sister's? Or, better yet, won't you come over and have dinner with us?"

"Yes'm, thank you, ma'am," he mumbled mechanically. Then he caught himself up and added:

"I ain't stoppin' long. I got to be pullin' north again. I go out on tonight's train. You see, I've got a mail contract with the government."

[1]From *Brown Wolf and Other Jack London Stories.* Copyright by the Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

When Madge had said that it was too bad, he made another futile effort to go. But he could not take his eyes from her face. He forgot his embarrassment in his admiration, and it was her turn to flush and feel uncomfortable.

It was at this juncture, when Walt had just decided it was time for him to be saying something to relieve the strain, that Wolf, who had been away nosing through the brush, trotted wolflike into view.

Skiff Miller's abstraction disappeared. The pretty woman before him passed out of his field of vision. He had eyes only for the dog, and a great wonder came into his face.

"Well, I'll be ——!" he enunciated slowly and solemnly.

He sat down ponderingly on the log, leaving Madge standing. At the sound of his voice, Wolf's ears had flattened down, then his mouth had opened in a laugh. He trotted slowly up to the stranger and first smelled his hands, then licked them with his tongue.

Skiff Miller patted the dog's head, and slowly and solemnly repeated, "Well, I'll be ——!"

"Excuse me, ma'am," he said the next moment, "I was just s'prised some, that was all."

"We're surprised, too," she answered lightly.

"We never saw Wolf make up to a stranger before."

"Is that what you call him—Wolf?" the man asked.

Madge nodded. "But I can't understand his friendliness toward you—unless it's because you're from the Klondike. He's a Klondike dog, you know."

"Yes'm," Miller said absently. He lifted one of Wolf's forelegs and examined the footpads, pressing them and denting them with his thumb.

"Kind of soft," he remarked. "He ain't been on trail for a long time."

"I say," Walt broke in, "it is remarkable the way he lets you handle him."

Skiff Miller arose, no longer awkward with admiration of Madge, and in a sharp, business-like manner asked, "How long have you had him?"

But just then the dog, squirming and rubbing against the newcomer's legs, opened his mouth and barked. It was an explosive bark, brief and joyous, but a bark.

"That's a new one on me," Skiff Miller remarked.

Walt and Madge stared at each other. The miracle had happened. Wolf had barked.

"It's the first time he ever barked," Madge said.

"First time I ever heard him, too," Miller volunteered.

Madge smiled at him. The man was evidently a humorist.

"Of course," she said, "since you have only seen him for five minutes."

Skiff Miller looked at her sharply, seeking in her face the guile her words had led him to suspect.

"I thought you understood," he said slowly. "I thought you'd tumbled to it from his makin' up to me. He's my dog. His name ain't Wolf. It's Brown."

"Oh, Walt!" was Madge's instinctive cry to her husband.

Walt was on the defensive at once.

"How do you know he's your dog?" he demanded.

"Because he is," was the reply.

"Mere assertion," Walt said sharply.

In his slow and pondering way, Skiff Miller looked at him, then asked, with a nod of his head toward Madge:

"How d'you know she's your wife? You just say, 'Because she is,' and I'll say it's mere assertion. The dog's mine. I bred 'm an'

raised 'm, and I guess I ought to know. Look here. I'll prove it to you."

Skiff Miller turned to the dog. "Brown!" His voice rang out sharply, and at the sound the dog's ears flattened down as to a caress. "Gee!" The dog made a swinging turn to the right. "Now mush on!" And the dog ceased his swing abruptly and started straight ahead, halting obediently at command.

"I can do it with whistles," Skiff Miller said proudly. "He was my lead dog."

"But you are not going to take him away with you?" Madge asked tremulously.

The man nodded.

"Back into that awful Klondike world of suffering?"

He nodded and added: "Oh, it ain't so bad as all that. Look at me. Pretty healthy specimen, ain't I?"

"But the dogs! The terrible hardship, the heartbreaking toil, the starvation, the frost! Oh, I've read about it and I know."

"I nearly ate him once, over on Little Fish River," Miller volunteered grimly. "If I hadn't got a moose that day was all that saved 'm."

"I'd have died first!" Madge cried.

"Things is different down here," Miller explained. "You don't have to eat dogs. You

think different just about the time you're all in. You've never been all in, so you don't know anything about it."

"That's the very point," she argued warmly. "Dogs are not eaten in California. Why not leave him here? He is happy. He'll never want for food—you know that. He'll never suffer from cold and hardship. Here all is softness and gentleness. Neither the human nor nature is savage. He will never know a whiplash again. And as for the weather—why, it never snows here."

"But it's all-fired hot in summer, beggin' your pardon," Skiff Miller laughed.

"But you do not answer," Madge continued passionately. "What have you to offer him in that northland life?"

"Grub, when I've got it, and that's most of the time," came the answer.

"And the rest of the time?"

"No grub."

"And the work?"

"Yes, plenty of work," Miller blurted out impatiently. "Work without end, an' famine, an' frost, an' all the rest of the miseries—that's what he'll get when he comes with me. But he likes it. He is used to it. He knows that life. He was born to it an' brought up to it. An'

you don't know anything about it. You don't know what you're talking about. That's where the dog belongs, an' that's where he'll be happiest."

"Maybe the dog has some choice in the matter," Madge went on. "Maybe he has his likes and desires. You have not considered him. You give him no choice. It has never entered your mind that possibly he might prefer California to Alaska. You consider only what you like. You do with him as you would with a sack of potatoes or a bale of hay."

This was a new way of looking at it, and Miller was visibly impressed as he debated it in his mind. Madge took advantage of his indecision.

"If you really love him, what would be happiness to him would be your happiness also," she urged.

Skiff Miller continued to debate with himself, and Madge stole a glance of exultation to her husband, who looked back warm approval.

"What do you think?" the Klondiker suddenly demanded.

It was her turn to be puzzled.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"D'ye think he'd sooner stay in California?"

She nodded her head with positiveness.

"I am sure of it."

Skiff Miller again debated with himself, though this time aloud, at the same time running his gaze in a judicial way over the mooted animal.

"He was a good worker. He's done a heap of work for me. He never loafed on me, an' he was a joe-dandy at hammerin' a raw team into shape. He's got a head on. He can do everything but talk. He knows what you say to him. Look at 'm now. He knows we're talkin' about him."

The dog was lying at Skiff Miller's feet, head close down on paws, ears erect and listening, and eyes that were quick and eager to follow the sound of speech as it fell from the lips of first one and then the other.

"An' there's a lot of work in 'm yet. He's good for years to come. An' I do like him."

Once or twice after that Skiff Miller opened his mouth and closed it again without speaking. Finally he said:

"I'll tell you what I'll do. Your remarks, ma'am, has some weight in them. The dog's worked hard, an' maybe he's earned a soft berth an' has got a right to choose. Anyway, we'll leave it up to him. Whatever he says, goes. You people stay right here settin' down.

I'll say good-by and walk off casual-like. If he wants to stay, he can stay. If he wants to come with me, let 'm come. I won't call 'm to come an' don't you call 'm to come back." . . . .

"Well, then, I might as well be gettin' along," Skiff Miller said in the ordinary tones of one departing.

At this change in his voice, Wolf lifted his head quickly, and still more quickly got to his feet when the man and woman shook hands. He sprang up on his hind legs, resting his fore-paws on her hip and at the same time licking Skiff Miller's hand. When the latter shook hands with Walt, Wolf repeated his act, resting his weight on Walt and licking both men's hands.

"It ain't no picnic, I can tell you that," were the Klondiker's last words, as he turned and went slowly up the trail.

For the distance of twenty feet Wolf watched him go, himself all eagerness and expectancy, as though waiting for the man to turn and retrace his steps. Then, with a quick, low whine, Wolf sprang after him, overtook him, caught his hand between his teeth with reluctant tenderness, and strove gently to make him pause.

Failing in this, Wolf raced back to where Walt Irvine sat, catching his coat sleeve in his

teeth and trying vainly to drag him after the retreating man.

Wolf's perturbation began to wax. He desired ubiquity. He wanted to be in two places at the same time, with the old master and the new, and steadily the distance between them was increasing. He sprang about excitedly, making short nervous leaps and twists, now toward one, now toward the other, in painful indecision, not knowing his own mind, desiring both and unable to choose, uttering quick sharp whines and beginning to pant.

He sat down abruptly on his haunches, thrusting his nose upward, the mouth opening and closing with jerking movements, each time opening wider. These jerking movements were in unison with the recurrent spasms that attacked the throat, each spasm severer and more intense than the preceding one. And in accord with jerks and spasms the larynx began to vibrate, at first silently, accompanied by the rush of air expelled from the lungs, then sounding a low, deep note, the lowest in the register of the human ear. All this was the nervous and muscular preliminary to howling.

But just as the howl was on the verge of bursting from the full throat, the wide-opened mouth was closed, the paroxysms ceased, and

he looked long and steadily at the retreating man. Suddenly Wolf turned his head, and over his shoulder just as steadily regarded Walt. The appeal was unanswered. Not a word nor a sign did the dog receive, no suggestion and no clew as to what his conduct should be.

A glance ahead to where the old master was nearing the curve of the trail excited him again. He sprang to his feet with a whine, and then, struck by a new idea, turned his attention to Madge. Hitherto he had ignored her, but now, both masters failing him, she alone was left. He went over to her and snuggled his head in her lap, nudging her arm with his nose—an old trick of his when begging for favors. He backed away from her and began writhing and twisting playfully, curvetting and prancing, half rearing and striking his forepaws to the earth, struggling with all his body, from the wheedling eyes and flattening ears to the wagging tail, to express the thought that was in him and that was denied him utterance.

This, too, he soon abandoned. He was depressed by the coldness of these humans who had never been cold before. No response could he draw from them, no help could he get. They did not consider him. They were as dead.

He turned and silently gazed after the old

master. Skiff Miller was rounding the curve. In a moment he would be gone from view. Yet he never turned his head, plodding straight onward, slowly and methodically, as though possessed of no interest in what was occurring behind his back.

And in this fashion he went out of view. Wolf waited for him to reappear. He waited a long minute, silently, quietly, without movement, as though turned to stone—withal stone quick with eagerness and desire. He barked once, and waited. Then he turned and trotted back to Walt Irvine. He sniffed his hand and dropped down heavily at his feet, watching the trail where it curved emptily from view.

The tiny stream slipping down the mossy-lipped stone seemed suddenly to increase the volume of its gurgling noise. Save for the meadow larks, there was no other sound. The great yellow butterflies drifted silently through the sunshine and lost themselves in the drowsy shadows. Madge gazed triumphantly at her husband.

A few minutes later Wolf got upon his feet. Decision and deliberation marked his movements. He did not glance at the man and woman. His eyes were fixed up the trail. He had made up his mind. They knew it.

And they knew, so far as they were concerned, that the ordeal had just begun.

He broke into a trot, and Madge's lips pursed, forming an avenue for the caressing sound that it was the will of her to send forth. But the caressing sound was not made. She was impelled to look at her husband, and she saw the sternness with which he watched her. The pursed lips relaxed, and she sighed inaudibly.

Wolf's trot broke into a run. Wider and wider were the leaps he made. Not once did he turn his head, his wolf's brush standing out straight behind him. He cut sharply across the curve of the trail and was gone.

THE PURSUIT[1]

By Samuel A. Derieux

Cyclone Bill Simmons, burly, hard and crimson of face, turned an overheated runabout out of the blazing highway and into a grove of oaks where stood the convict camp.

"All right," he said. "Get out."

Tom Abercrombie, face drawn, hands manacled, clambered out of the car. He was a man of sixty or thereabout, long, lank, wiry, with a white patriarchal beard and white beetling brows. His cheap suit of black and his black slouch hat were covered with dust.

"That way," ordered Simmons.

As if he did not hear, the old man glanced about him: at the long, weather-stained tent, open at both ends and at the sides, and showing within two rows of untidy bunks; at the smaller tents that formed a hollow square; at the shed for mules deeper within the grove; at the small group of negro convicts—cooks and trusties—who from near the big tent stared curiously at him.

"This way," repeated Simmons harshly.

[1] From *Frank of Freedom Hill.* Used by permission of the publishers, Doubleday, Page & Company.

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The man and dog turned and disappeared silently into the undergrowth

The lean cheeks flushed. The old man looked quickly at Simmons, who during the twenty-mile drive from the county seat had not spoken a word to him. Then, head bowed, he followed the man toward one of the smaller tents.

It was plainly the guard tent; it stood at the entrance to the camp, where a path turned in from the road. In front, under the shade of an oak, were two or three splint-bottom chairs. And chained to the oak by a staple driven into the trunk, drowsing in the heat of the summer mid-afternoon, lay a bloodhound.

He had barely looked up when the car drove in. His heavy black body with its tan belly and legs was completely relaxed, and he was panting slightly. His head, which he held up as with an effort, was massive, leonine, rugged, with chops and dewlaps that hung loosely down, giving the impression of a detached and judicial attitude toward life. His expression was grave, thoughtful, melancholy, as if his ancestors, pondering through the centuries on the frailty of humanity as they saw it, had set their indelible stamp of gloom and sorrow on his face. Toward him the burly guard and the tall bearded prisoner made their way.

There are men to whom no dog can be insensible; men with a secret quality of magnetism

or understanding which makes any dog, at their approach, look up. When Simmons passed the great hound did not stir; but when Tom Abercrombie came opposite him, he lifted his muzzle, grizzled with age, and his melancholy, amber-colored eyes met the man's.

The old man stopped. It was as if he had found, in all this strangeness, a friend. He spoke before he thought—half under his breath.

"Old Whiskers," he said gently. "Old Gray Whiskers."

Simmons turned in a flash, his face suddenly more crimson than ever, his eyes blazing.

"What did you say to that dog?" he yelled.

The old man looked at him steadily but did not reply.

"Now here!" The guard's voice rang out in the grove. "I know you, Abercrombie, and I know your game, you bloody, long-whiskered, knife-totin' throat-cutter. You are tryin' to make friends with that dog!"

He went to a near-by bush, got out his knife, and cut a heavy switch.

"Take this," he commanded. "Oh, you can catch hold of it! Catch it with both hands. Never mind the bracelets. Take it. Hit that dog. Hit him!"

The dreamlike state in which the old man had

been wandering dissolved. His eyes narrowed to mere slits behind the beetling brows. The cold steel of the mountaineer, the mountaineer who weighs his words, was in the slow-drawled reply.

"Wal, now, I reckon I won't."

A moment they faced each other, Simmons eyes murderous. Some fear of an investigation if he struck the old man, something daunting, too, that he saw in the mountaineer's eyes, restrained him.

"Abercrombie," he said, and moistened his lips with his tongue, "I brought out in that car three boxes of shotgun shells—buckshot—extra heavy loaded. Get me?"

Such was the initiation of old Tom Abercrombie as a convict. That afternoon he was entered on the books as a "dangerous" prisoner; that night he lay on an iron cot, staring up at the roof of a solitary tent, which, according to law, had to be provided for him. On his ankles were locked two steel anklets, connected by a chain eighteen inches long. This chain, in turn, was locked to the cot.

Shame lay with him as he stared upward—shame and a terrible loneliness, and dread of the future. At sunset he had watched a long line of shackled negroes, followed by guards

with shotguns, file into camp. Tomorrow he himself would be one of that gang; and not only tomorrow, but for two years. Assault and Battery with Intent to Kill—this was the verdict. And yet he hadn't intended to kill anybody, he had only meant to remonstrate.

Three young fellows, sitting at a table in a cheap ice cream parlor—it had seemed a crystal palace to the old man and to Molly his wife, fresh from the deepest recesses of the mountains—had made fun of Molly and her sunbonnet.

When they did that, the mirrors that lined the walls, the enameled-top tables, the sunlit street showing through wide open doors, had all turned red before his eyes. He had risen from his chair and gone toward this seat of the scornful. "You fellers," he had warned in a low voice, "you fellers don't want to say anything like that again."

They had looked at him in sullen astonishment; then they had sprung to their feet. According to the testimony they gave in court he had confronted one of them, an open knife hidden up his sleeve. This was not true, and he denied it stoutly on the stand. As a matter of fact, he had not thought of his knife until the three young bruisers, habitués of the place,

and of the questionable poolroom in the rear, rushed him all together, and a dirty-aproned waiter, coming up from behind, hit him a crack that jarred his skull. Then he had sprung back and drawn his knife.

The wounds he inflicted were not serious, he had simply held his assailants off; but the policeman who ran in, followed by a crowd, found the knife in his hand. The testimony was against him; besides, he did not make a good witness. No man does who holds something back. And what old Tom held back was the remark the young men had made.

On that point his lips were stubbornly sealed. He did not even tell his lawyer. As for Molly, she had not heard. Poor girl, she was a bit deaf, her sunbonnet came down close over her ears, and she had been eating her ice cream, oblivious. He did not want her to know, ever. He did not want the court to hear. What's more, he did not mean that it should hear.

The courts of justice, like the mills of the gods, ought to grind slow and grind exceeding small—sifting carefully the evidence, examining deeply into the character and motives of accuser and accused. But the gods have eternity at their disposal, and their mills are run by unerring, self-administering laws; while the

courts are sometimes harassed with a heavy docket that must be got through with, and the laws are made and administered by erring mortals. When they are overcrowded, there is inevitably, now and then, a victim.

Hence old Tom Abercrombie, chained to a cot, staring up at the roof of a tent, oppressed with a terrible loneliness; thinking of a long double cabin in a mountain-girded valley, far over the Tennessee line, where he and Molly had lived forty years; of the cornfields in a creek bottom, of children and grandchildren, of widely scattered neighbors and friends.

Next day he was put to driving four mules hitched to a road scraper. Chains clanking, he had to climb as best he could into the iron seat. The humiliation of striped clothes he was spared; that barbarity had been done away with by law. He wore his black trousers, a blue shirt, and his broad-brimmed hat. Once on the seat no one passing along the road could see his shackles; but as if they were heated red-hot these symbols of shame burned into his flesh.

In the road ahead and in the road behind, negro pickers and shovelers toiled away, watched over by guards with shotguns. He saw the eyes of these guards turn constantly toward

him. "You want to watch that old devil," Simmons had warned them. "He's dangerous."

The days that followed were all alike; days of toil that began before sunrise, continued through blazing middays, and ended after sundown. Always, before and behind, the gang picked and shoveled, always the eyes of the guards were turning toward him. Always against the horizon the mountains, flecked at midday with clouds and shadows, beckoned him like a mirage.

Sometimes from the top of a hill, under his broad hat, he studied the lay of the land. In his mind he mapped out the watercourses, and the stretches of woodland that led with least open country to the mountains. Sometimes at night he dreamed of a double cabin in a cool mountain-girded valley.

"You want to watch him," warned Simmons again and again.

Once Molly came to see him. Simmons himself, at the guard tent, questioned her roughly, then shrugged his shoulders and let her pass. Throughout the interview, though, he sat over there by the guard tent, his eyes always on the two of them; and at his side, but never looking up at him, lay Sheriff, the bloodhound, panting.

She told him how hard she had tried to get him off; how hard his friends had tried. They had been to see the solicitor, the sheriff, and finally the governor himself. "They were all nice to me, Tom," she declared; "but they say they can't do nothin'. The governor talked to me a long time in his office. He asked all about us—where we lived, how many children we had, how it all happened. But he says he was elected to see the laws carried out, an' can't interfere.

"Here's what folks say, though," she whispered quickly. "If you got away over into Tennessee the law wouldn't follow you. The newspaper folks tell me that. The sheriff as good as told me. The governor wouldn't requisition you, they say. He wouldn't either, Tom. I know he wouldn't."

Then her eyes widened with horror. "Oh, I wasn't going to tell you that!" she gasped. "Don't try to get away. That man over yonder, he'll kill you, Tom. Folks said he would—said he had killed two. I know he will, since I've seen him. He's awful, awful!"

She went on protesting, in terror that he would try to do the very thing she had suggested. She told him about the bloodhound. The newspaper men said he never lost a trail—that

nobody who stayed on the ground had ever got away from him.

"They know ever'thing, these newspaper men," she went on. "They advised me right. Tom, two years ain't long. We waited longer than that to git married. Remember, Tom? We ain't old yet—"

"Poor old gal," said Tom.

It was the sight of a dilapidated and deserted blacksmith shop near the road they were widening, and of some rusted fragments of tools scattered about here and there, which caused old Tom, as the road scraper passed and repassed the spot, to look very closely down into the upturned dirt. And it was the glimpse of something in that dirt which caused him suddenly to rein up the four mules and glance quickly in the direction of the two guards.

It was an afternoon of terrific heat, following a prolonged drought. In the road ahead the gang of negro convicts toiled silently, sluggishly, in the blinding glare. Simmons had driven off in the direction of the city an hour before. The two remaining guards, with shotguns under their arms, stood in the scant shade of two dust-covered trees.

"Jake," said the old mountaineer calmly to the negro on the machine behind him, the negro

who handled the levers, "Jake, there's a bolt loose somewhar on this scrape'. Reckon I better tend to it myself."

Without any apparent hurry, he clambered down from the seat. Quickly, secretly, he picked out of the upturned earth an object, which he thrust into his shirt. Deliberately, as if encountering obstacles which caused him trouble, he hammered away at the supposed loose bolt. When at last he clambered back into the iron seat, heated like the top of a stove, there was a slight flush on his lean cheeks, and a brightness as of triumph in his deep-set eyes.

On the way back to camp a country store stood beside the road. Here he asked permission of one of the guards (they were not all like Simmons) to go in and buy himself some tobacco. The guard, who went in with him, saw nothing suspicious in the fact that, along with the tobacco, the old man purchased also a package of chewing gum.

That night he did not sleep. By raising up on his elbows in his cot he could see, in a chair tilted back against an oak tree, the night guard, with a gun across his knees, and farther on, in front of the guard tent, the outline of the bloodhound asleep. Once, when he thought the guard nodded, he reached in his shirt. He

got out the object he had picked up in the road and rubbed it against his shackles. The rasp of file on steel sounded loud in his tent like an alarm. He thought he saw the guard stir, and the bloodhound lift his head. He lay silently down. Later he punched a hole in the mattress and stuck the file deep into the straw.

Next day he thought of Molly and home. As he sat on the road scraper the mountains, purple and lofty against the sky, seemed now to be beckoning him. He was satisfied of that from what Molly had told him.

He bided his time until one stormy night when wind and rain drove the bloodhound within the shelter of the guard tent and, thrashing through the branches of the oaks and flapping the canvas of the big tent, drowned out to all ears but his own the rasp of a file on steel. Next day the continued rain made road work impossible, and as he hobbled back and forth to feed the mules, chewing gum hid two triangular cuts in his shackles. Again that night, storm and rain drowned out the sound that came from the tent where he sat hunched forward on his cot, sawing patiently and methodically away.

Hours before dawn he slipped out of the rear of his tent and walked quickly toward the mule

sheds, where he stood listening. Then, hat pulled down low, he hurried through the grove, across a field, and made for the black rim of the surrounding forest.

He could not have picked a better night had choice been given him. The rain, falling steadily, was washing his trail. It was the season of full moon, and in spite of storm clouds the night was dimly luminous. He struck straight for the bottoms and the creek, whose swollen turbulence sounded above the rain. He plunged into the water, which at the deepest places came no higher than his waist, and partly by feeling, partly by sight, now and then stumbling over bowlders, now and then having to push aside thick underbrush, he made his way for something like two miles, upstream.

Carefully he chose the spot where he left the creek. His eyes, grown accustomed to the night, picked out a tree that grew out of the ground at a distance from the bank, then bent over it. He caught hold of the branches, swung himself up, felt his way like an opossum along the trunk, swung to another tree, and did not touch ground until he was some hundred feet from the shore.

An indistinct, dripping dawn that showed low driving clouds found him wet to the skin, like

an old fox who has run all night, but confident, like one who has covered up all trace of a trail, making his steady way with long mountaineer's strides across tangled bottoms, into stretches of woodland, over hills that grew ever steeper and higher, through undergrowth that grew ever denser.

His face was very serious, but not anxious. His nerve was too cool, his courage too steady, for him to feel any impulse to run. His lifelong experience as a hunter who travels far had taught him to save his energy. As the light of the gray day grew stronger he distinguished, at no great distance ahead, it seemed, the outlines of misty mountains. He recognized the gap where the highway crossed this first ridge into the recesses of the Big Smoky Mountains, beyond the Tennessee line. On the night after tomorrow, he calculated, he would tramp up on his porch and Molly would open the door for him.

Now and then, as twilight advanced, he stopped and listened. One of the guards, more kindly disposed than Simmons and the other guard, had, during the hour of lunch one day, told him something about the bloodhound, Sheriff. The dog, he said, was not a full-bred bloodhound; his grandfather was a foxhound.

Consequently, he ran a man freely, as a hound runs a fox, barking on the trail.

He was hard to hold in, the guard had gone on to say, so hard that Simmons never tried to run him to the leash, but turned him loose, to find the track himself. Then Simmons followed as fast as he could. No trouble to follow him. "You never heard such a voice as he's got in your life," the guard had added with a grin. "He usually puts a man up a tree inside two hours, and keeps him there till Simmons comes up. No danger of the man comin' down, either — not with that dog at the bottom of the tree."

And so, remembering these things, old Tom stopped now and then to listen. No sound but the steady dripping of rain from trees—no sound of pursuit. Miles lay between him and the camp, and still the rain was washing his trail.

It was on top of a treeless hill that commanded the sights and sounds of the country for miles about that he stopped once more to listen—and his white hair stirred on his head, just as the hair of the old fox who has run all night might rise on his back. From far behind through the enveloping mists and over intervening hills, so far that at first he could not be sure, had come the bay of a solitary hound, trailing.

He stood transfixed, his patriarchal beard dripping. Many a creature, fox and wolf, and man himself, has through the centuries trembled at that sound. There was a silence, during which he collected his wits, momentarily upset. Then again, faint and far away, like the ringing of a distant bell, came the sound. Miles between where he swung himself out of the creek and where he now stood the hound was coming on his trail. Tom turned like a stag, brushed aside the bushes, and began for the first time to run.

At the top of the next hill, not having heard it while he crashed through the undergrowth of the bottom, he stopped again, panting. Though still far away and faint, it was unmistakable now, and there was in the sound a note of melancholy triumph and joy.

The shrewdness of all hunted animals took hold now of the old man's nature. He ran half a mile, then turned and doubled his track. At a stony spot, where a trail does not remain long at best, he stopped, swung his arms and jumped as far as he could to the right. For a quarter of a mile he continued trotting at right angles to the original trail, then he turned once more toward the mountains.

He could hear it most of the time now, even

when he ran. Occasionally, as the dog crossed a bottom evidently, it was almost inaudible and seemed far away. Then, as he reached a highland, it came clearer and surer, more resonant, and closer than ever. And now from back there, farther away than the dog, came a sound that for a moment chilled his blood—the wild, faint yell of a man urging the hound on.

Unreasoning rage stirred within the old man, flushed his face with hot blood, made his eyes blaze. Who was he to run from any man? Then quickly rage cooled and calculation took its place. He must throw that hound off his trail.

He back-tracked once more. He turned at right angles to his original trail. He continued for an eighth of a mile, then turned back on his second track. He crossed the original trail at the point where he had left it, and kept straight on, forming the letter T. Once more, on this short arm of the T, he turned at right angles, this time toward the camp itself, and, retracing his steps, formed another T.

Thus he made an intricate pattern of trails, comparable somewhat to the visible marks made by a fancy skater. The hound, finding tracks running apparently in every direction, would grow bewildered. He would circle of course,

but the circles themselves would lead him off on tracks that turned back on themselves. As an additional puzzle, wherever the old man doubled, he put his arms about a tree, and remained, his body pressed against the trunk a moment, as if he had climbed it. "His whiskers will be whiter than they are now," he grinned, "before ever he works all that out."

Two miles farther on, breathing hard, he sat down on a log, for he must have some rest. He knew when the oncoming hound, who had worked out the first and simpler puzzle, struck the second and intricate one. First deathlike silence—the hound had come to the end of the trail. Probably he was whiffing the trunks of the trees roundabout, looking up eagerly into them. As if he had been in one of those trees himself, Tom could see it all, so well did he know the way of a hound.

Still silence. The dog would be circling now. Followed an eager bay as he struck one of the misleading trails. He thought he was off! Then silence again, and after a moment the long-drawn howl of a hound frankly perplexed, and the fierce, angry yell of a man far behind. With fingers that trembled because of the chase he had run, Tom reached in his pocket and got out a cob pipe. This he filled with tobacco,

and fumbling in an upper pocket of his shirt, found some matches.

For ten minutes he sat on that fallen pine, smoking and listening to the unseen drama in the bottoms over there beyond the hill, his hopes ever rising, and with these hopes a gratifying sense of achievement and triumph. Once or twice the dog bayed uncertainly. Once or twice the men yelled, it seemed to him, with lessened confidence. Once it sounded as if the hound had sat down on his haunches, raised his muzzle on high, and poured out to heaven his perplexity. Tom had seen them do that. Then another silence, as if the chase had died out.

Still Tom sat listening. In his exultation he had forgotten for the time home and Molly, and the horrors he had left. Suddenly he rose, and his face was drawn and white. He turned and began to run, but even as he did so he knew that it was all over.

Between him and the farthest outskirts of the pattern he had worked out, had come one long-drawn, triumphant bay after another. The veteran, wiser by far than any dog Tom had ever known in all his knowledge of dogs, had worked the puzzle out, had run in ever-greater circles, keeping his head, knowing that somewhere,

cutting the circumference of a greater circle, he would find the true and straight trail.

And he was coming, coming fast. He could not be more than a mile behind. He must be at the top of the hill where Tom had enjoyed his brief triumph; he must be smelling the very log on which Tom had sat. He had left the log. The sound burst on the old fugitive now, almost like a chorus, menacing, terrible, inexorable as fate. All the hills, all the valleys were echoing as if a whole pack were running. How much worse than futile had been his tricks! They had only halted the great bloodhound long enough for men and shotguns to come up!

From now on he kept straight forward, sometimes walking, sometimes trotting, sometimes breaking into a run. Now and then he stumbled with weariness; once he fell face downward. Anybody but a fighter would have taken to a tree, like an opossum, run at last to shelter.

Out of breath, he came at length to the top of a ridge, and through an opening in the trees looked across a wooded valley beyond which rose the lofty undulations of the Tennessee mountains. The clouds had been growing thin, and now the sun burst through, and flooded those mountains with light.

"They ain't a-goin' to take me," said the old mountaineer—"not alive!"

Not even the fox waits for hounds to seize him; but, his race over, turns at bay and dies with his face to his enemies. And now, in the woods of the extensive bottoms that lay between the ridge and the mountains, old Tom Abercrombie, his race over, stopped and turned his face toward his pursuers.

And as he did so all fear left him. His mind became as clear as the sparkling sunlight about him. He was no longer a fleeing animal matching wits with a pursuing one. He was a man standing upright, looking oncoming fate in the face.

Old Tom did not think of it this way. And yet, perhaps because of some sense of the fitness of things, he took off his hat and dropped it beside him. Near at hand a giant sycamore, dead and leafless, rose loftily above the smaller growth into the sky. Beside this tree he stood, his white hair and beard disheveled and glistening in the sun, his eyes, that had shown a momentary despair when he sprang up from the log, steady, fierce, undismayed.

If the hound attacked him he would fight—fight with his hands, for he had no other weapon. If the hound merely bayed him, he would wait

until the guards came up. Their commands he would disregard; he would not even throw up his hands. He knew what the result would be, he had no illusions about that: Simmons would kill him.

He did think of Molly. He saw her, all her life tramping back and forth from the spring to the house, solitary and lonely; he saw the cornfield in the bottom, where he had plowed so many springs. He saw the faces of children and grandchildren, one by one. These things made him choke, but they had no effect upon his mind; that was made up. Life is good, but it is not worth some things.

All these impressions ran through his mind, swiftly, independent of the element of time. As a matter of fact, there was not sufficient interval for connected thought. Ahead of him was an open place in the woods, a place strewn with flinty stones and arrowheads, with now and then a black and rounded bowlder, rolled there by glaciers that had once moved over the face of the earth. This open spot, made barren by forces older than man himself, he had crossed in one last effort to make his trail difficult for the hound.

His eyes were fastened on it now. The sun, hot and brilliant since the passing of the storm,

blazed down upon it. On the other side the forest grew dense and high like a wall of green. And now out of this forest, into the ancient opening, came the hound.

Tom had never felt any grudge against the dog—he was only obeying a law of his nature, only running a trail. Fascinated, he watched the animal, oblivious for the moment of the significance of his presence. He had been running fast in the forest, but now on this flinty and difficult ground he slackened his pace and came on slowly, like a patient, methodical fellow who makes sure he's right as he goes along. His nose, almost touching the ground, never left the trail.

In crossing the opening the old man's foot had turned on a stone; he had staggered, and placed his hand against one of the black bowlders for support. And now, when the hound came to this spot he stopped; he lifted his head and whiffed the rock the man had touched with his hand. Next, he reached up on the bowlder and looked at its top. Then he came on, nose low once more, pendulous ears actually dragging on the ground, tail erect, and now and then wagging stiffly, as with joy.

While Tom still watched him he raised his muzzle; and there came from his throat a deep,

musical, bell-like challenge that echoed loudly in the opening itself and more airily and sweet between the ridge and the mountains beyond. In answer, from a mile behind, so Tom calculated, came a far more terrible sound—the wild, savage yells of two men, one wilder and more savage than the other.

The old man took a deep breath and his beard was thrust suddenly forward. But for the dog, those men would be helpless. But for the dog, he could turn now, and the woods would swallow him up. In a flash an inspiration was born, a conquering purpose such as must have entered the mind of prehistoric man. He waited, his eyes on the hound.

A dog is nearsighted at best, and Sheriff was old. When he was a short two hundred feet from the tree there came to his nose the smell, not of a trail itself, but of the man who made the trail. He stopped and lifted his head. A moment he stared. Then he raised his grizzled muzzle to the sky and poured out to high heaven the announcement that here in the woods at the end of the trail, standing beside a tree, was a man!

Then he started back, amazed, for this man, instead of climbing the tree, as all men did when he bayed them, was coming straight

toward him. His hand was outstretched, his eyes were blazing, and there was a smile on his face. "Old Whiskers!" he was saying. "Hush, now, hush! Hush!" The man had stooped down, his hand still extended. "Come here!" he commanded.

The great hound began to tremble. Those terrible eyes were looking deep into his. They were commanding him, they were pleading too. He had seen them before, back there in the camp, and he had not forgotten.

He heard behind him another yell. He tried to look back, but the eyes held him.

"No!" the man cried sternly—then, "Old boy—old Whiskers!" He began to pant; the bay he would have uttered died in his throat. Another yell and another, still he did not reply. His tail was tucked now. He was looking at the man wonderingly, beseechingly. His universe was changing, was centering in that man before him, that man who understood.

Again the yells, and now, beyond the opening behind, the faint crash of running footsteps. His hair rose on his back with rage. His world had turned about. Those were his enemies coming. All the loyalty of his dog's soul had gone out to this man who understood, all his hatred to those who never had. He started to

turn about. He would meet them in the opening. He would rush at them.

"No!" cried the man who understood.

When he looked at Tom once more the miracle of ages past had been repeated; the man saw, in the eyes of the dog, trust, humility, undying devotion. His voice trembled for the first time.

"Old Whiskers!" he said gently. "Old Gray Whiskers! Quick now!"

The pursuing guards never knew why the woods ahead of them grew suddenly silent, why the tree-bay of the bloodhound that had sounded once clear and unmistakable sounded no more, though as they ran they filled the morning with their yells. They did not see the great hound go trembling to the man. They did not see the old man for just a second catch the massive head between his hands.

They did not see the two turn and disappear, swiftly, silently into the undergrowth that grew densely behind the open space and the giant sycamore tree.

When, all out of breath, they reached the spot from whence had proceeded the solitary tree-bay, they looked about at vacant woods. Frantically they searched the undergrowth, shotguns ready, calling to each other in their

excitement. Man and dog had vanished as if they had never been.

But Simmons did not believe in miracles. "The old devil killed the dog!" he cried. "He had a knife about him. But where's the blood, and where's the body?"

They hurried here and there as they glimpsed red spots, only to find a leaf killed by the sun and fallen before season, or a bush reddened by berries.

"We miscalculated the spot," swore Simmons. "It wasn't here it happened."

And he sat down out of breath and leaned his burly back against the trunk of a giant sycamore tree.

The sun was dropping over the mountains when the two guards, empty-handed, got back to camp. The valleys lay in shadow, but far up in the enormous folds of the Tennessee mountains its last crimson rays shone on a bearded old man trudging along a narrow road toward the west.

He looked weary and footsore and his clothes were torn by briers. But his face was alight, as if with anticipation of tomorrow. Now and then he spoke. And behind him a great, strange-looking, long-eared hound lifted his head, as if drinking in the sound of his voice.

BILL[1]

By Roy Norton

There were three of us, Tom, me, and Bill. Bill was the dog and the last to join.

The place of our coming together was in Alaska, away off up there where even nowadays there are but few white men, and where at that time all was covered over with the glamor of mystery and the splendid terror of the unknown.

We never knew where Bill came from, but, anyway, that was nobody's business, and in Alaska at that time there were lots of questions which no man ever asked another. Maybe Bill had done something for which, if there had been necessity, he would have changed his name; but we never thought so. As far as we ever knew, he was a thoroughbred gentleman, with all that the title implies, by birth and instinct. Certainly he was always on the square with us, and we went through some pretty hard times together.

Tradition said that Bill first landed in Alaska swimming with an unknown white man—probably his partner—and valiantly trying to

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assist him to the shore. The Indians at Katmai picked them from the smother of foam where the breakers sweep over shoals on one side and hammer themselves to spray against a tall cliff on the other.

The man lost his life, but Bill pulled through, and was finally dragged away, overpowered and resisting, into the interior, to become the property of the tyune, or chief, of Kolukuk. That's where we first met him.

Tom and I had a hard time getting into Kolukuk. Had been out of grub for a day or two when we first sighted the village, then unknown to white men, away over across an arm of the sea. This arm was frozen and covered with snow as we looked down upon it from a high, bleak embankment. At best, salt ice is pretty treacherous; but we were too desperate to wait to travel round the rim of this basin, so we unhooked the sled rope and turned it loose. Down it went, smashing, bumping, and bounding out upon the border ice.

We followed with the dogs, slipping, sliding, and scrambling, until we, too, landed. Then we hooked them in again and started on this cold, white flat toward the peeping roofs of the igloos, where the smoke rose up as though anxious to get freed from it all.

Away out on the ice, a full mile from the village, and alone in stately solitude and filled with disgust for Alaska, sat Bill. We yelled at him, wondering who he was, and why he was out there by himself, and then, to our surprise, he arose to his feet and came to a fine point—stood with head and tail stretched rigidly out and his right foreleg lifted for a moment as if he were posing for a statue. He was only waiting for another sound to make sure that we were white men.

We called again, using our hands to yell through, and that ended Bill's hesitancy or wait for introduction. The wind, with a handicap, couldn't have caught him as he came to us. He stopped out in front, heedless of the snarling team and wanting to make quite sure that we were his sort. Then he lunged all over us, he was so glad to see his own kind of folk again.

"Well, what do you think of that? It's a white man's dog," said Tom.

Bill looked at him and understood. And right here, as we three met, we knew that we understood him. God fixes things so that sometimes it's possible for men and dogs to communicate with each other, and this was one of those times.

"I've had a devil of a time here in this strong-smelling Indian village," Bill said by way of conversation, "and am mighty glad you came along. I'm hungry to talk to, and be with, my own people again." It was there we named him Bill, first because that's a gentleman's name, and second because he looked like a partner we once had down Arizona way.

Then we drove hard toward the igloos, thinking that after all these months we were going to meet one human being that we could feel sure of; but it was a disappointment. There wasn't any white man there, and most of the Indians had never seen one. They crowded around us in sullen, suspicious curiosity. We weren't popular.

The only reason we got into the kasima—that's a sort of a clubhouse—was because they thought we must be some kind of traders. And all the time while we stood outside, Bill stayed with us, showing his teeth to the village dogs, and occasionally trying to snap an Indian that came too near. How he did hate the whole lot!

We'd been in some pretty rank Indian villages, but this one beat them all. The natives were very poor, very unfriendly, and, worst of all, very dirty. We crawled through the usual

tunnel, fighting our way with any dogs we met in the darkness, and up into an underground burrow. Bill started after us, but the tyune raised such a yell that we didn't take Bill's part, because we didn't want to make the chief too hostile. So Bill went back and crawled on our sled, being anxious to stay with something civilized.

Outside, the night came down, a wind raged and tore loose chunks of ice and floating snow from the silent whiteness, and we were mighty glad to be sheltered, even in such a hole as this. It was a big place, lighted only by the flare of the fire from the pit in the center of the dirt floor, with no opening except the door to the tunnel and a little hole in the roof covered over with sewn bladders.

In this stifling nest were crowded about fifty bucks, squaws, and papooses, and, to add to the general bad odor, bladders of seal oil, strings of dried fish, and chunks of rancid blubber jostled one another from the ridgepoles and fought to see which could smell the loudest. They weren't a pretty lot, these Indians, in the silence and the darkness, with the flash of light occasionally shining up against their straight, matted hair and ugly cheek bones. To make any sort of peace we had to pass around a little tea, which

they took readily, and in return gave grudging toleration. They knew we hated them, and we knew they hated us, from the jump-off.

Tom and I drew cuts to see which one should sleep next to the wall, and Tom won. He always was a lucky cuss. The tyune took the place of honor next me, or else got there because he hoped to steal something before the night was over. He was a squat, villainous-looking old buck, wrinkled around the eyes and adorned with sparse whiskers which looked as if they might have been stolen from some careless porcupine. They just added to his general shagginess.

Along in the night I woke up with something blowing noisily and warmly against the back of my neck. The fire in the pit had died down to coals, so it was dark. I reached out and took a feel at this thing. It was the tyune's face, where he had worked himself under my robe, the air having cooled off a bit. I carefully raised my foot till it was firmly planted in his paunch, and with a good brace against Tom, kicked. He landed about ten feet out.

There were wails, and shrieks, and shouts, and, above all, savage growls and barks. Bill was there, and had got pretty busy. Just as a buck threw a pitch knot on the coals in the

pit and the flames began hurrying upward, Tom and I got to our feet. Down on the ground was the tyune, with Bill trying to gnaw a hole in him.

We yelled at the dog, and he backed off with a jump and landed between Tom and me. By this time we were with our backs against the wall, and pistols in hand, wondering what was going to hit first.

It wasn't a very comforting picture that came when the light grew strong. There we stood—Tom, Bill, and me—Bill snarling and with every hair on his silky back at a stand, and a bunch of mad savages drawn around us in a semicircle. The fire in its flickering showed just how sore they were, and made pretty prominent the spears they held. They didn't need paint to go to war right then. They were all ready.

The tyune blamed it all on Bill. In a gentle patois, composed of Russian, Chinook, and Siwash, he explained that Bill always had been a devil, and, before his voice broke off in a grunt, promised to eat Bill's heart. I guess he would have prepared him for that expiatory ceremony right then if we had backed ground. Between growls, Bill heard him and actually looked up at me and grinned with joy—a kind of unholy "got-him-that-time" look.

It cost us ten minutes' powwow, which was cheap, and a pound of tobacco, which was expensive, to get peace in the family, and then we had time to look around. Bill had been so hungry to associate with white men that he had dug a tunnel and eaten clean through a wood door to enjoy our society. But when the kasima grew quiet again, you may be sure Bill went to sleep between Tom's feet and mine. Neither Tom nor I wanted to take a chance, because Bill gave us to understand that the tyune would murder him if we didn't stand pat. So we stood.

And that's about the pleasant sort of time we had for the next couple of days till the storm let up and we hired a guide and got ready to tackle the pass beyond the village. Naturally we had many quiet talks together, Tom, and me, and Bill.

Bill said as plain as could be, "You fellows aren't going to leave a thoroughbred like me here in this hole, are you?" And we had come to an agreement we wouldn't.

Well, we offered the tyune everything from a jews'-harp to a dog for Bill, but he just wouldn't let go. For three hours we tried to kaboosak—that means trade—but it was no use. So we decided to run a bluff, and slid out of the igloos

and over the snow toward the mountains. We never got a chance to run it, though.

Before we had gone a mile, and that, too, with Bill's entreaties and pleadings ringing out in the cold air all the time, we heard a commotion back of us. There came Bill, and he was coming, too; don't mistake. He had chewed the thongs with which the tyune, after blanketing his head with a pelt, had bound him, and was running so hard that his belly wasn't more than six inches from the snow crust.

Bill wasn't saying anything, but about the whole village, led by the tyune, was. Pretty soon the tyune dragged out one of those old Hudson Bay blunderbusses and turned loose a couple of shots at him. No more, though, because those slugs which the benevolent H. B. used to trade cost a nickel each, and that makes gunning expensive.

I forgot to say that Tom and me had the finest dog team that was ever brought together in the Arctic. Anyhow, I think so. Had them trained so that with a "Yip-yip" they would break into a dead run. When we saw that mob coming after Bill, we made a jump for the sled, did the tallest "yip-yipping" we had ever done, and were off in a cloud of snowdust. The guide had stopped, and when we caught up

with him, didn't want to join the party. But we needed his advice, so stopped long enough to take him on about as you would a sack of salt.

We looked back. The tyune, being a little overfed and out of practice, had dropped behind, but there was one big buck pelting along that looked fit to run a week without a let-up. Evidently the whole village had their bets on him, but Bill was distancing him at every jump.

We went at least three miles this way before an accident happened to Bill. The long, loose ends of the thong caught round a snag sticking through the snow, he did a great somersault in the air, and found himself a prisoner. Lord! how he did yell at us!

"Can't you see I'm tangled?" he called over and over again. That's the only time I ever heard him cry as if in hopelessness. We halted the sled, and I went back, resolved to stop the runner with a gun, if necessary. Just as I got Bill loose and was accepting his thanks, I heard a noise on the sled ahead, and Tom and the guide were having it.

The guide wasn't inclined to guide. Wanted to go back to his igloo, and howled all sorts of gibberish because we wanted to take Bill along. Tom expostulated with him, using his fist. Tom's no slouch.

I, too, had business. I dropped on my knee, to get good aim, and took a wing-shot at the runner. He was out of range, but there came a little spurt of snow about ten feet ahead of him and that discouraged him. I didn't have to shoot again, although Bill wanted me to. The native stopped real quick, shook his fists, and made medicine to the gods to do all sorts of things to us, and started back to his family.

That was the first time, so far as I know, that Tom or I ever stole anything. And we never have been sorry. But after that, night and day, we had to watch that guide.

Talk about Chilkoot Pass, made famous by the struggles of Boston boot-and-shoe clerks to get to Klondike; it's nothing but a summer outing for the Amalgamated Ladies and Gentlemen's Heroic Mountain Climbing and Geographical Society compared with the one we went over.

It's a kind of funnel-shaped thing, about twenty miles long, and if you're fool enough to tackle it, you wait outside till there are no snow-whirls around the peaks and the day is still; then you dash madly into this funnel, and hope you are going to get through the spout end before the wind comes up. If Old Boreas comes up, you try to back out; failing in this, you die. Then you quit trying.

The long, loose ends of the thong caught round a snag and Bill found himself a prisoner

Now, there's a place in this pass where, after you've crawled up, and up, and up, along a steep slope, you swing around a mountain's edge and find yourself with nothing but a narrow ledge to work over for five or six hundred feet. Fierce place that! Just a little sloping shelf, and if you happen inadvertently to drop off, there won't be anything to distract your attention for quite a while.

The guide's feet slipped, and for about a minute he wallowed around on his ugly face and tried to scratch holes in the ice with his fingers and toes. If he'd been given ice-picks he might have done better. I didn't have time to watch him drop, although it would have been interesting. I was too busy.

The dogs backed up, the sled lost way, and then commenced to sheer off to follow the guide. There wasn't anything for me to do but try to hold it with my body. I threw myself flat down on the crust. I stopped the sled all right, but it began to look as though I, too, would go over, when all of a sudden something grabbed me from the uphill side; there was a scratching of claws gripping into the ice, and Bill was dragging me back for all he was worth.

You know how just a little help sometimes makes things easy? Well, that's what Bill did

for me. He hadn't been very particular, not having much time to choose holds, and had set his teeth pretty well into my hip. He was glad and at the same time apologetic until I just sat down, with my back to the wall, gathered his head up against my breast, and thanked him for the good turn. And all that time Tom, who had come back from away up ahead, stood there saying over and over, "Well, I'll be——!"

Then we went ahead and, being pretty well through the pass, didn't miss the guide much. I rather think Bill was glad he went overboard.

In the wild places where a man's free there are trips and trips, but this was a bad one, with villages far between—hundreds of miles—and many of them starving, the caribou having run north that winter. It was always on and on, the snow soft at times, till you wore your heart out tugging at your sled ropes and swore at the balls that clogged the web when your shoes settled deeply. Then would come the cold days when traveling was good, but you suffered in other ways.

Back of the sled were bloody prints on the snow where Bill walked. A blanket kept the chill from cutting through his silky hide, but nature hadn't made his feet for the North. The wolves and dogs and other wild things up there,

even to the rabbits, have big splay feet covered with hair around the pads—kind of a natural snowshoe. Those dogs know how to care for themselves, but it was hard on Bill. It was a new game to him. He used to come limping to me, hold up a paw, and say: "Get a little of that ice out of there, won't you, pal? It hurts some." We made moccasins for him, but they didn't do much good.

So we took to hauling him on the sled, although he protested, and let me know that he felt himself something of a nuisance. But he never lost heart nor complained, and on nights when timber wolves prowled round and round the camp, trying to bring down a dog, would have willingly taken a chance and ended his life in one splendid fight, fang to fang and sinew to sinew. He never fought with the team. He was too dignified, and merely tolerated the other dogs as beasts of burden. And they seemed to realize that in his way he was a king. Intelligence is always commanding.

Half-rations for the dogs and our grub gone; moldy dogfish for ourselves and quarter rations for the dogs; then no rations at all; hunger shrieking in the wild, and the weakened team down until it could barely drag the almost empty sled; the tent and stove abandoned,

and an unknown trail ahead—that's what we came to.

In a starving camp, surrounded by staggering, footsore, skeleton dogs, one night we came to the last resort and resolved to begin the following day by the sacrifice of a dog, and so on each day, until we could reach somewhere out over the whiteness and find food. But it didn't come to that, because on that very night Bill, with his finely trained nose, again saved the situation.

Out back of the camp fire he unearthed from beneath the snow an abandoned cache of fish, years old, but better than starvation. And he called to us to come as the famished pack hurled itself upon him. Heaven! how we fought, we men and dogs! And when they were beaten back, Tom had his legs torn to the muscles, I had my share, and from under the lot we took out staunch old Bill, still silent, and uncomplaining, and victorious.

The find saved our lives, but always after that Bill was a cripple. In the battle some one of the pack had ripped the shoulder tendons of one of his legs, and sent him limping through life.

He was in better shape when we reached a village, the most prosperous on the coast, and made ready to take the next and hardest jump. At this place we found a half-breed missionary,

a fine old chap, doing all the good he could for his people and living there year in and year out, patiently earning his way to a white man's heaven. He was a good man, I know, because Bill forgave that half-strain of Indian blood and took to him.

The way ahead was so hard and unknown that we decided to leave Bill there with the missionary to recuperate till spring, when we could send round the coast and have him brought to us. But it was a mighty hard thing to do, and I'm not ashamed to say that Tom and I were all broken up. I told Bill, but for once he didn't seem to understand, or else took it as a joke. I shan't forget my last day with him. There were a few ptarmigan around there, and Bill and I played truant like a pair of boys together and went hunting. Bill was happier than I had ever seen him before. And he knew more at that game than I did. He worked very hard, though, and was tired the next morning when we put the rested pack into the harness and prepared to go.

Bill limped up to the sled, and I never saw any one so badly hurt as he was when I said: "Bill, you aren't going any farther this trip. You're going to stay here, where you can rest and get strong, until spring."

I couldn't look into his eyes, because he said: "What have I done? Haven't I always tried to do the square thing? Aren't we pardners? Did I ever show the white feather?"

It had to be done, though, so I took him into a log hut, hugged him, and told him "Good-by," and we pulled out. From behind us came the long wails of one cruelly deserted, and mourning a farewell.

There isn't much more to this story; all our lonesomeness in the separation, and the weariness and suffering of the trip which nearly ended our lives, doesn't count. We did well that early spring, and when the ice was gone, Tom worked the claim alone while I went back in a little coaster to bring Bill. But he's there yet.

After we left him behind, he grew moody, and always yearned for us. He passed his days in running to the tops of the little hills and watching, always watching, for some one who never came. He retained his dignity, and gently, but without reciprocating, accepted any courtesies shown him by the missionary, who loved and understood and pitied him. Dog and half-breed, both were gentlemen.

There came a night when the ice had gone out and some fishermen came in a smack — came in while the night was cruel, the waves

ripping across the shoals, and the skies wildly heavy with the tearing storm. The Indians huddled on the beach in powerlessness when the smack went down, and the dogs of the village, blindly aware of the tragedy of the sea before them, stretched hairy throats heavenward and wailed the Malemute song of the dying—all the dogs but Bill.

In silent sorrow he limped backward and forward, until from out the half-darkness came a call in the speech he knew: "Help! Help! For God's sake, help!"

In the ghastly flare of the night, from where he stood he saw a man, a white man, clinging to a piece of drift and lifted on the crest of the waves. It was one of his own people, and he knew it. I can fancy brave old Bill, in splendid valor, saying to himself: "I'm deserted by my friends, and not much good; I don't like the water, and I'm a cripple. But, anyway, I'll make a try."

That was the end. When the sea beat the bank sullenly on the next gloomy morning, it chucked, with savage derision, two things on the beach—the body of a man with widely staring eyes and clenched fingers, and that of a crippled pointer dog whose teeth had been so firmly set in the man's flannel shirt that natives

had to tear the garments of the dead to bring separation.

Once, so a Britisher told me, there was a man named Byron who wrote an epitaph for a dog and put up a monument. I'm sure our monument is bigger. It stands out there over that bleak point when the snows are everywhere, or in summertime looks accusingly at the sea. It says:

"NOT TO A DOG; BUT TO OUR PARDNER BILL."

WHEN THE PRINCE CAME HOME[1]

By George T. Marsh

The door of the trade-house at Rupert was thrown open, admitting a blast of biting air and a flurry of powdery snow, followed by the rugged figure of Bruce Cristy, son of the factor.

"The Queen of Sheba's pups have come, Father," he cried, "and Michel says they're the likeliest-looking litter he's ever seen at Rupert House."

The factor, grinning with pleasure, reached for his foxskin cap. "We'll have a look at 'em. It's time we had some good dogs at Rupert."

Now the Queen, an Ungava-bred husky, bought when a puppy from a Whale River Eskimo, was far and away the best sled-dog at the post, and the pride of the big Scotchman. Massive of bone and frame, with the stamina of a caribou, she had won, as a yearling, a place in the traces of the Hudson's Bay Company's winter packet that took the mail north up the east coast. Therefore it was with high hope that Cristy floundered over the narrow dog

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trail in the deep snow to an unoccupied shack behind the trade-house.

In the open door of the building stood two of the shaggy veterans of the mail-teams, peering curiously with wolfish eyes into the interior, while from a deep throat within a low, menacing rumble, like the muffled threats of a September northwester gathering on James Bay, held them at the threshold. For there was not a slant-eyed husky at Rupert House that had not felt the white fangs of the Queen, who long since had asserted her sovereignty by right of the power that lay in the lunge and clash of her punishing jaws.

As the factor and his son entered the shack, the growl changed to a whine of recognition from the great dog, who lay on some old sacking in the corner, with six blind, whimpering balls of fur.

"Well, Queenie, old girl, you've sure done yourself proud," chuckled the delighted Cristy, patting the head that sought his hand. "Let's have a look at the family."

One after another he picked up the squealing puppies, his practiced fingers sensing the bone and build of each as if he were fit for the collar and traces of the winter trails.

"Hello! Here's one that's the picture of

the old lady herself," he continued, lifting a squirming puppy for inspection.

"Look! He's got the same white star on his chest, and the four white socks," cried Bruce.

"Yes, and in bone and build he's the best of the lot," added his father. "I guess we'll name him Prince right here, for he's got the right to the title. Some day he'll lead the winter packet a day ahead of time into Whale River, and Mackay'll have to find a new joke. We'll have some sled-dogs worth their whitefish at Rupert yet, lad."

That year the spring came early to Ruperts Land. The melting snow of April brought to the huskies a swift release from the winter's thraldom to collar and traces, and snowshoes were discarded by the little colony for the slush-proof sealskin boot. Then the ice began to boom and churn and grind day after day past the post to the salt bay. The great river, swollen by the floods from far Mistassini, crept foot by foot up the high shores until it seethed and hissed almost at the level from which, for two centuries, the brave little fort had hurled a mute defiance at the sullen north. Bound for the marshes of the west coast, long lines of gray geese, led by veteran couriers of the air,

crossed like caravans the blue desert of the sky. White hosts of wavies, their snowy wings flapping in the sun's rays like huge banners, passed high overhead to their nesting-places in nameless arctic islands. In the wake of the gray and the white squadrons came the little brothers of the air, duck and yellowlegs, warbler and thrush. And soon, from the neighboring forest, piped the heralds of soft days in Ruperts Land.

With the waxing of the spring the sons and daughters of the Queen grew into hulking, leggy puppies, always in the way of everyone, including themselves. But reckless indeed of the safety of his throat would have been the half-breed who kicked them from his path while the restless, narrow eyes of the Queen kept vigilant watch. And it was not long before the puppy with the white socks and star-emblazoned chest began to realize the promise of his earliest youth. Soon his fiercer spirit, aided by the might of his sturdier build, brought his kinsmen into subjection, and he became the acknowledged leader in every puppy plot and misadventure about the trade-house and factor's quarters.

It was the Prince who was found under the trade-house endeavoring to bolt Cristy's best pair of sealskin boots. It was the Prince who, unobserved, gnawed into a bag of flour, and

on appearing before his family, an apparition in white, was set upon fiercely by his kinsmen in a body, who failed to recognize him in his new rôle of purity. Not until he had administered to them a sound drubbing, in the course of which activity he lost his disguise, was he readmitted to membership in the family circle. Again, it was the Prince who, at the tender age of three months, demonstrated to the half-wild tomcat of the Cristy's that a husky pup with a star on his chest and the teeth of an otter was not to be cuffed with impunity. Thereafter Lynx curled a tail somewhat shorter than he formerly wore, and affected a decided hitch in his gait.

But though the Prince soon acquired a reputation for a peppery temper and the love of a brawl, Bruce Cristy early discovered that he, alone, of the children of the Queen, not even momentarily could be lured from the side of his master by coaxing and bribery. Early he acquired the trick of rushing full tilt at Bruce, in his lumbering puppy gait, yelping as he ran, only, on reaching him, to seize a hand in his open jaws, and, raising his slant eyes, to wait with fiercely wagging tail for the other hand to grasp his nose and roll him on his wriggling back.

So the northern summer passed, and with the first bite in the air came the gray and the white squadrons from the north to feed on the succulent goose grass of the south coast marshes. Under Bruce the Company Indians manned the goose-boats and left for the annual hunt on Hannah Bay for the winter's supply. With the exception of Cristy and some of the older post Crees, Rupert House was devoid of men.

It was a soft, lazy afternoon at the end of September—weather which always precedes the cold storm that ushers in the Indian summer on the bay. A week of the latter and the stinging winds would sweep down from the north, bringing the brant and the first flurry of snow. The dogs of the factor's mail-teams were sprawled around the trade-house, asleep in the sun. But sleep this golden afternoon was not for the offspring of the Queen. Vainly, under the lead of the Prince, master of sports, they had romped from the trade-house to river shore, and back to the spruce forest in the rear, in search of adventure. They had pawed and pulled at the inert anatomy of the Queen, only to be met with dire threats of chastisement in the form of low growls and lazy exposure of white canines as her head fell again in sleep. At last, in desperation, the hulking

Prince picked up a bleached caribou shin-bone, and, shaking it as he would a rabbit, challenged his comrades to take it.

With yelps of delight the pursuit began. Pellmell around the trade-house went the pack at the heels of the big puppy. Back again they came, scrambling over each other in wild confusion as they slid down the steep river bank in full cry. Then up again and over to the forest raced the squealing huskies, hard in pursuit of one too fleet to be overtaken. Soon, out of the forest galloped the Prince, and headed for the trade-house. Arriving there, he stopped and allowed his nearest pursuers to come almost within reach, then, shaking his bone in their faces, he fled up the river shores toward the mission and the cabins of the post Indians a few hundred yards off.

The puppy had not covered half the distance when from the grass back of the mission-house rose a big white husky, opening his mouth in a wide yawn as he stretched. For a moment he surveyed the authors of the bedlam which had wakened him; then, with ears erect and hair on neck bristling, began to walk slowly through the long grass toward the oncoming puppies. Farther away, near the Indian shacks, other huskies arose, shook themselves, and

turned in quest of the cause of this ruthless interference with their slumbers.

When the Prince and his pursuers had covered half the distance to the mission-house, the white sentinel watching them threw back his head and roused the post with the long-drawn call to arms of the half-wild descendants of the timber wolves.

The challenge of the white husky stopped the romping puppies in their tracks. Young as they were, they already knew the meaning of the slogan. Sensing the peril into which their heedless crossing of the post dead-line had placed them, they turned and fled for the safety of the trade-house. At the same time the Prince, far in front of his pursuing comrades, stopped, dropped his bone, and, with ears pricked and hair on neck and back stiffly erect, stood for an instant watching the white husky, who, as he trotted toward him, repeated the long howl of battle.

Immediately from the Indian shacks came the answer of the supporting columns. Then realizing the fate in store for a half-grown husky from the factor's quarters, caught alone near the mission-house, he lifted his head with a yelp of defiance and turned back. But the delay due to this momentary act of bravado

cost him dear. As they raced, the white dog, followed at a distance by his comrades, gained on the puppy at every bound. Now he crossed the frontier, but the trade-house still lay two hundred yards away. On came the big husky, yelping as he ran, until hardly a hundred feet separated them. Then, aware of the hopelessness of his attempt to escape, the puppy gave poignant proof of the blood royal that raced in his veins. Suddenly swerving, he checked himself, and, crouching with lowered head and feet braced widely apart, the fighting rage of a hundred wolfish forebears blazing in his narrow eyes, he awaited the rush of the white husky with a snarl.

The big dog, surprised at being met jaw-to-jaw by his quarry, whom he anticipated pulling down from behind, and unable to stop himself, leaped as he reached the puppy, while the Prince, springing forward at the same moment, slashed with his sharp teeth a deep gash in the white body as it passed over him. Gathering himself like a flash, the big dog turned and jumped back, sinking his long fangs into the shoulder of the infuriated son of the Queen. But no yelp of fear or pain left the throat of the puppy as he closed in what would have been a death grapple with his heavier and more

skillful adversary had not, at the instant that the white husky's superior weight bore him down, a gray streak shot through the air from behind, and a great slate-colored body catapulted into the white one, rolling it over and over, while punishing fangs slashed again and again into the white shoulders and chest, seeking the throat. Then, over the three, like tides on a reef, the yelping pack from the Cree cabins and the sled-dogs of the mail-teams, hurrying to support the Queen, met. Instantly there arose over Rupert House the wild din of two-score huskies, mad with the lust for blood, battling to the death.

Leaving the white husky gasping out his life through a ripped throat, the Queen, infuriated with the sight of the blood of her own body welling from the wounds of her puppy, stood over him, fighting like a demon. Lunging, slashing right and left with her knifelike fangs, she battled with her comrades against overwhelming odds, for the life of her son. But, though the dogs of the mail-teams were far outnumbered, they were picked animals, chosen for strength and endurance, veterans of a score of similar frays, and fighting together, as is their custom, they were more than holding their own when the big factor, striking right and left

with an ax-helve in each hand, sprang into the middle of the yelping, blood-smeared riot of enraged huskies. Yet not until reinforced by the Crees left at the post, and after a merciless use of the club, did Cristy finally separate the maddened brutes and stop the fight. Snarling their smothered rage as they limped, at times stopping to lick their wounds, slowly the dogs of the Crees were driven to their quarters. And behind them in the grass they left the stiffening bodies of five of their number that never again would mingle in fur-post brawl.

The battle over, Cristy turned anxiously to the Queen, who lay, oblivious to her own wounds, beside the limp body of her son, washing with her healing tongue the ugly slashes in chest and shoulder.

"How did this thing start, Antoine? I wouldn't lose this puppy for a dozen black-fox skins," he asked his half-breed clerk as he carried the torn body of the Prince to the trade-house.

"First tam I hear de husky shout, I look and see de white dog chase de Prince pup. De oders run, but de pup he stop and mak' fight. Den de Queen, she travel lak timber wolf for de white husky. Dat Prince, he ver' cross for a pup. I tink he mak' some beeg fight w'en he grow up; pull de sled lak bull moose."

"So it was the Queen who killed the white husky?"

"Ah-ha! She keel him lak he was snowshoe rabbit."

When they had washed and dressed the wounds of the Prince, they placed him on the sacking in the shack where he had come into the world. There the Queen, hurt but superficially, kept guard night and day. Then the goose-boats returned from the Bay with their feathered freight of gray geese, wavy, and brant.

On hearing the news, Bruce hurried to his hurt puppy. In the doorway of the shack stood the Queen, who put her great paws on his chest in an endeavor to lick his face; then led him to the sacking in the corner of the room. At the sound of Bruce's voice, the fevered puppy raised his head with a feeble yelp, struggling to get to his feet, but his bandaged chest and shoulders held him helpless, so he lay with wrinkling nose extended toward his master, his bushy tail beating the floor.

The stalwart young Scot, with more than a suspicion of mist in his eyes, kneeling, pressed his bronzed face against that of the overjoyed puppy.

"So they chewed up my Prince pup, did they?" he whispered into a pointed ear. "Well,

they got what they deserved. He fought the white husky with the red eyes, didn't he? Yes, he did. Another year and they won't bother this pup much, I guess."

Under the careful nursing of Bruce the wounds of the Prince soon healed, but the November snows had whitened the wastes of Ruperts Land before he had regained his strength, and the winter was far advanced when his chest could bear the pull and drag of his first collar and harness.

With June returned the red fur-hunters from the upper Rupert and Nottaway river country to trade at the post. Tepees now dotted the cleared ground, while bark canoes like mushrooms covered the shore; and the buoys of nets set for the whitefish that came in with the flood-tide floated in lines on the river's surface. Rupert House had suddenly wakened with life and color. By day the swarthy children of the forest traded their winter's hunt for the supplies of the Great Company, or lounged around the trade-house, smoking and exchanging the gossip of the North. At twilight the laughter of women and the voices of children at play filled the air, for the dread moons of the long snow, with their cold and famine, were passed and the days of plenty at hand.

One evening two French half-breeds, lean from privation, with clothes and moccasins worn to ribbons, turned a shattered Peterborough canoe into the post. The strangers said that in the previous summer they had crossed the Height of Land from Lake St. John country, by way of the Roberval River and the Sinking Lakes, on the Labrador border, where they had trapped their furs. It was the most valuable winter's hunt that two men had brought to the post in the memory of the oldest Indian, and the suspicions of Cristy were aroused.

Part of their furs the breeds traded for a canoe, provisions, and ammunition, but refused to barter the foxskins. This convinced the factor that they intended to return to Lake St. John, where the free traders would pay them cash.

One morning Rupert House waked to find the strangers gone. That night when Bruce fed the sled-dogs, the Prince was missing. Then he knew that the husky had been taken from Rupert in the canoe of the half-breeds.

Quickly the post was aroused. Gathering his best voyagers in the trade-room, Cristy addressed them in Cree.

"The last sleep the strangers from the south left Rupert House. With them they took the

light of my eyes. And the heart of my son is sad. They journeyed far to trade their furs at the Big Water. This they did because they feared the heavy hands of the fathers at Ottawa, for they have broken the law. Tonight a canoe takes the river trail to Mistassini, another follows the coast to Moose, and a third journeys up the Big Water to East Main Fort, to bring back these men and the dog, which I prize. There is much flour and tea for the canoe that brings back the dog, and the Company debt of the crew shall be forgotten."

The voyageurs launched the canoes, with supplies for the pursuit, and disappeared in the dusk.

Far into the night the factor and his son sat speculating as to how the thieves had managed to overpower the great puppy and spirit him away without arousing the camp; while at intervals, outside, where the dogs slept in the grass, the deep throat of the Queen voiced her grief at the absence of her son in a long mournful howl.

Early in August a packet from Moose Factory, with government dispatches from Ottawa, told the story. The posts on the east coast were ordered to arrest two French half-breeds, accused of the murder, on the upper Roberval, of a

Montagnais, and the wounding of several others, in a successful attempt to rob a party of trappers of their winter's hunt.

Then the fur brigade arrived from Mistassini, and with it Michel and his tattered voyageurs. They had searched the length of the Rupert and the Marten Lakes trail to the south, but only once had found signs of the dog and the fleeing thieves. The factor at Mistassini wrote that he was crippled with rheumatism, and asked for an assistant.

"Well, here's where you get your chance to see some of the Height of Land country," said his father, handing Bruce the letter.

Three days later Bruce Cristy bade his family good-by, and started with the returning fur brigade for the great lake in whose half-mythical waters the white man's paddle has seldom dipped. Stepping into a birch-bark manned by four Crees, he placed his Winchester in its skin case at his feet, and turned grimly to his father, who stood on the shore.

"If they are hunting in the Mistassini country this winter and we don't get them, it won't be because I have hugged the fire at the post; and if I'm ever within rifle-shot and don't burn some powder, it won't be because I've forgotten my dog."

"Good-by, lad! Take care of yourself! We'll see you in the summer," called his father as the stalwart youth seized his paddle and gave the signal to start.

The five blades, driven by the toil-hardened backs and shoulders of the crew, churned the water in the wake of the brigade, and the long craft, followed by cries of "Bo'-jo'! Bo'-jo'!" from the little group of Crees on the shore, shot forward on its three-hundred-mile journey.

On arriving at Mistassini in September, Bruce found the factor Craig unable to walk, so he took active charge of the post. While most of the Crees were as yet in their summer camps on the lakes, curing fish for the winter, he sent canoes warning them to keep a sharp lookout for the renegades from Lake St. John, and promised a reward for the dog. But the couriers returned with no news of the Prince.

In October the stinging winds brought the snow to the lonely post far on the Height of Land, and the thoroughfares began to close with the early ice. Then for a month the little settlement was marooned in the snow-swept solitudes, while the ice was making on the wide lakes and swift rivers, strong enough for men and dog teams to travel. With the coming of the freezing November moon Bruce left the

post with two dog-teams for the Sinking Lakes. Christmas found him still in the forests of the Labrador border, traveling from camp to camp of the Cree and Montagnais trappers who traded at Mistassini, searching for news of two half-breed strangers, and a big husky with star-emblazoned chest. Finally, disheartened after two months' fruitless wandering, he turned back on the Mistassini trail.

It was a bitter January day on the wind-harried level of the great lake, with the air filled with powdery snow that cut the faces of the men like whiplashes. Gradually the traveled trail, ice-hardened at Christmas by the friction of many feet and runners, filled with drift, and the brisk trot of the dogs slowed to a walk as the light waned and the early dusk crept out from the deeply shadowed spruce shores. Jean, the French Cree driver at the gee-pole of the slowly moving sled, was searching the neighboring forest for a place to camp, while behind him walked Cristy, occupied with his thoughts.

Suddenly the lead dog yelped, starting the team forward on a trot. Looking up, Bruce saw a dog-team far ahead on the trail.

"It must be our boys," he said. "Stir up those huskies, Jean. Peter may have news."

The driver cracked his whip at the leader's ears, and the pursuit began. From the first they gained rapidly. Soon hardly a mile separated the teams. Then, catching a side view where the trail turned at right angles to round a point of the shore, Cristy's heart leaped, for the sled ahead, on which the driver rode, was drawn by a lone husky.

Bruce gripped the arms of the Cree. "There's only one dog on that sled, Jean! Come on!" Springing in front of the team, he ran up the trail.

At Cristy's approach the huddled figure on the sled gave no sign. At intervals an arm rose and fell, lashing the dog forward to the unequal task. Hardly a rifle-shot separated them when the exhausted dog, after repeated attempts to drag the sled through a drift, lay down on the trail. Again the whip rose and fell, rose and fell, but the husky did not move. Slowly the driver got up from the sled, and reeling forward struck the dog savagely on the head with the butt of the whip, then, carried off his balance by the blow, fell headlong to the snow at the dog's side. Like a flash the husky turned, and before the man could regain his feet lunged at his throat, forcing him, struggling, backward upon the trail. Once,

twice, three times the fangs of the maddened brute tore at the throat of the helpless driver. Then, while the infuriated beast still worried the crumpled figure in the snow, Bruce reached them.

The gaunt husky, baring his white fangs with a snarl, turned from the lifeless body. Raising his massive head, across which, from nose to ears, ran great welts left by the dog-whip, he glared with narrow, bloodshot eyes at the new enemy. And on the shaggy chest the frozen ooze from a harness-sore stained with a crimson smear a large white star.

"Prince! Prince! Don't you know me, boy?" cried his master, dropping his mittens, and reaching out with palms upward toward the angered dog, whose blood was still hot with the rage of battle.

The husky, expecting a blow from a dog-whip, and receiving no attack, stood for an instant confused. But the approach of the yelping team again aroused his fighting blood, and he faced around in his traces to defend himself, hair on back bristling.

"Good old Prince! Don't you remember me, boy? Don't you remember the Queen, the Queen, your old mother, Prince?"

Gradually, as Bruce repeated the words once so familiar to the wanderer, the bared fangs

were covered. The pointed ears of the husky, laid back against the skull, slowly righted themselves as the soothing tones of the voice he once loved stirred the ghosts of vague memories of other days, blurred by months of cruelty and starvation.

As his lost master continued to talk, the dog thrust forward his bruised muzzle and, with ears pricked, sniffed at Bruce's hand.

"Good old Prince! We've found him at last!" Bruce continued, his fingers now touching the extended nose of the puzzled dog. Then with a long whiff memory returned, and the husky recognized the beloved hand of his master of the happy days.

With a yelp, the starved Prince, forefeet uplifted, threw himself at Bruce. A pair of strong arms circled the shaggy neck, and a wind-burnt face sought the scarred head, while into a furry ear, amid whines of delight, were poured the things a man says only to his dog.

A slash of the knife freed the Prince from the harness. Kneeling on his snowshoes, Cristy ran his fingers over the lumps and bruises on the great emaciated body that told the story of long months of slavery under brutal masters. Finding no broken bones, he turned to the dead man in the snow who had paid so dearly for

every welt. For a moment, as Bruce gazed on the face, distorted in death, with glazed, sunken eyes staring sightless into the bitter night, pity held him; until the touch of a battered nose seeking his hand again hardened his heart.

"When their grub gave out," said Bruce, "I suppose he knifed the other one and started for the post."

They buried the murderer in the deep snow of the shore and left him to the tender mercies of his kind, the furred assassins of the forest. Then they made camp and fed the famished dog.

When the Prince had regained his strength, back at the post, Bruce decided not to wait until the thoroughfares cleared for canoe travel in May, but to leave for home on the first crust.

So one March afternoon found the Prince leading the dog-teams slowly over the lump ice marking the long stretch of the Kettle Rapids, far down the Rupert River. Whirlpools, shoots, and cross-currents, defying the inexorable cold long after the swift river closes elsewhere, keep the River House trail broken here until January. Then, succumbing to the fierce temperature of the midwinter nights, the rapids freeze throughout their length in irregular mounds and ridges.

For an hour they had been hugging the shore, avoiding the treacherous footing of midstream. At last, on turning a bend, the white shell of the Rupert again stretched level before them.

With a cheery "Marche, Prince!" Cristy broke into the snowshoe swing, half-walk, half-trot, which eats up the miles as does no gait on bare ground. In answer to the command, the willing leader started the team at a fast trot. Out into mid-river, where the going was good on the hard crust, swung Cristy, followed by his dogs. Then, as they left the foot of the rapids, without warning the ice sank under them, plunging driver and yelping dogs into the water.

With a few powerful strokes Cristy fought his way to the sound ice. Behind him, the Prince and the second dog struggled desperately against the drag of the sinking sled holding the rear dogs under. Supporting himself on one arm, Bruce called to the panting husky straining every nerve to reach his master. "Come on, Prince! Come on, Prince!" he cried, working desperately with numbed fingers to get at his knife. Then the swift current carried sled and helpless huskies downstream under the struggling Prince, momentarily easing the strain on the traces which bound him to them, and he

reached and got his forefeet on the ice at his master's side. At the same instant Cristy freed his knife from its sheath. And as sled and drowning dogs were sucked under the ice, and the nails of the Prince's clinging forefeet slipped slowly toward the edge, while the doomed dog voiced his despair in a smothered whine, the traces were slashed.

Freed from the deadly weight, with a heave of his shoulders the husky raised himself out of water, when the body of his master at his side furnished a foothold for a hind leg, and the dog was out.

Stiffening under the paralyzing chill and hampered by skin capote and snowshoes, Cristy was weakening rapidly, when the Prince, sensing his master's peril, braced himself at the slippery edge of the firm ice and seized an arm in his strong teeth. Then as he strained for a foothold, with forelegs planted wide apart and nails biting deep into the treacherous surface, the thick back of the great husky bowed slowly into an arc, and the freezing man was dragged to safety.

The dazed Cristy got to his feet and staggered to the shore, where he stood for a while staring helplessly at the grave of his faithful huskies. At length he turned to the dog at his side, who

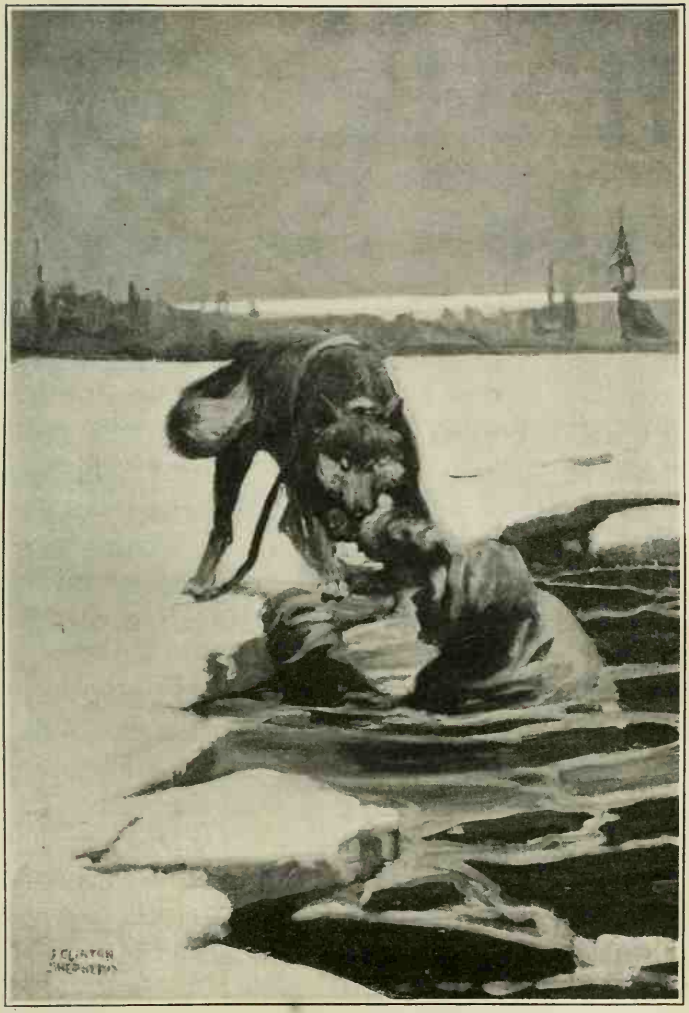
held in his half-open jaws his master's unmittened hand, begging with beating tail for recognition.

Silently the man knelt and, seizing in his arms the shaggy neck, crushed his face against the great head.

"We're square now, boy. I won't forget and you won't forget," he said hoarsely, as the happy Prince sat motionless. "But we're a hundred miles from home, boy, and not an ounce of grub, or a blanket, and the wind's risin', and it'll go twenty below before daylight. It's travel day and night for us if we ever see Rupert again, and there'll be no whitefish and tea and bannocks on the way."

For answer, a cold nose and a hot red tongue sought the man's face, while shivering Cristy threw off his ice-caked capote and squeezed the water as best he could from his freezing clothes.

Then man and dog, side by side, started down the desolate river guarded by the pitiless hills, in the race against cold and starvation. Somewhere below, he knew there was an old Company cache. The bitter wind, drawing upstream between the ridges, was strengthening. No man might face its stinging drive that night and save his face and hands. Already the blood was



Prince braced himself at the slippery edge of the firm ice and seized an arm in his strong teeth

leaving his fingers in the frozen mittens. So he hurried to make the cache before dusk.

White mile after mile the man and dog left behind them, but no sign of the cache. Cristy wondered if he had passed it, buried in the snow. It had been there in the fall, not far below the Kettle Rapids, and he must find it soon. He was traveling head down to avoid the sting of the wind, but his fingers might go at any time, and he thought of what that would mean.

Finally, he decided to plunge into the first timbered hollow and make camp. What a mockery that would be for man and dog — without food! Still, a roaring fire would help. But without an ax. Unless he found down timber, he couldn't hope for much of a fire without an ax, and the night would be bitter. The heart of the half-frozen youth sank. He thought of the family at Rupert that would not know his fate until the spring canoe from Mistassini reached the post with the news that he had left the lake in March. Or possibly the sled with the dogs would be washed ashore and found by the Nemiskau Crees on their way to the spring trade. So he mused as his snowshoes crunched the brittle crust.

Then he pulled himself together. Men had

traveled in the North farther without food, and in midwinter, too, when the wind was worse, and the nights forty and fifty below. Out of the wind it wouldn't be so bad. A thaw was due any time, and the wind never blows long in March in the North. But they must get into the first thick spruce soon, or—Then, half buried on the shore, he saw the cache.

"Come on, boy!" he cried, and shortly was shoveling an entrance through the low door. Inside, some snow had drifted through chinks in the walls, but the roof was wind-proofed by the crust; and his spirits rose, for there at the end of the shack stood a rusty tent stove.

When he had gathered birch-bark and dry spruce sticks, his stiffened fingers fumbled for his match box. With an exclamation of fear he swiftly searched each of his pockets. As he did, the lean face went pale under the weather-tanned skin. Turning to the dog, he cried: "The matches went down with the sled, boy! We're done for! We'll never see Rupert now!"

As a last resort, he carefully explored the shack, but it had been unused for years, and he found no matches, but stumbled upon what the wood-mice had left of an old Company blanket. Again he searched the room for that which meant warmth and life, but in vain.

Then the desperate youth set to work banking in the walls of the cache with snow to make it wind-proof. This accomplished, he sealed the low doorway and prepared to fight through the bitter hours for his life. His woolen clothes, thanks to the severe exercise, were partially dry; so were the socks he wore next to his feet. The outer ones he took off, kneaded until they were soft, wrung out what moisture he could, and put on again.

Scraping and pounding the heavy ice from the coat of the Prince, who, owing to the thick underfur of soft hair and the hardihood of his breed, was immune to cold, Cristy made the dog lie down and, wrapping the blanket around them, clasped the great beast closely to him. Through the bitter hours the warmth of the dog's body alone kept the heart of his master beating and the blood moving in his hands and feet.

At last the blue March dawn broke over the cache on the Rupert, and with it the wind fell. Later the rising sun overtook on the river trail a traveler with a ragged blanket slung on his back, and a slate-gray husky. Once the dog ran ahead, and turning, rushed yelping back to take in his jaws a mittened hand, and march, swishing a bushy tail, beside the man

as if urging him to a faster pace. But the traveler, with head down and haggard eyes, swung stiffly at the same stride, for Rupert House lay ninety white miles away, and one who starves must save his strength.

Three days later old Michel opened the door of the trade-house at Rupert, stepped into the caribou thongs of his snowshoes, and shuffled up the high river shore toward his cabin. The strong March sun, reflected from the sparkling white level of river and bay, fairly blinded the eyes. The tough old breed had not deigned to slip on the rabbitskin mitts that hung from his neck by a cord, and in the sun his cap of cross-fox with its bushy tail dangling jauntily behind seemed too warm. Yet lately the nights had been bitter, with much wind. In a week, perhaps, the snow would melt a little each day at noon, to freeze hard again at sunset. Then in a few sleeps would come the big March thaw, and the trails would close for a moon. So he mused as his snowshoes lazily creaked on the crust.

Suddenly the tall figure stopped in its tracks, a lean hand shading the keen eyes.

"Ah-hah!"

The exclamation was followed by a long silence as he stood, motionless, gazing up the river.

"Cree comin'!" he muttered after a time, and shortly added, "De rabbit, he give out in hees countree for sure."

With narrowed eyes still shaded, the watcher followed the moving spots on the snow far up the river trail.

"Ver' strange ting!" he finally said aloud. "He travel all over de river lak' he seek wid 'mal de tête.'" The old man slowly shook his head. "De husky, why he jump de trail? Ver' strange ting!"

Presently the approaching objects on the wide river enlightened the keen eyes.

"Ah-hah!" This time with more vehemence, for the black spots were beginning to assume shape. "Dere ees no sled. De Cree starve out for sure."

Nearer came the one seeking the succor of Rupert House from the pitiless North. Then the old man expelled his breath with a long "Hah!" The mystery of the uncertain course of the stranger was solved.

"Snow-blind!" he said, and turned back to the trade-house, to reappear with the factor and two Company men.

"A snow-blind Cree, with a lone husky, you say, Michel?" inquired Cristy, his eyes following the pointing finger.

"Snow-blind, right enough, and starved, poor devil! Why, the dog's pulling him back; he's leading him. He's hitched to the husky."

For a moment, in silence, they watched the uncertain progress of man and dog. Then the factor exclaimed: "There, he's gone down! Michel, harness a team to the cariole! We'll go and get him."

Stunned, or too weak to rise, the snow-blind stranger lay where he fell, while the dog nosed the prostrate form. Then the dog threw back his head and roused the dogs of Rupert House with a long howl.

Cristy and a post half-breed were rapidly approaching when the fallen man, with an effort, got to his feet and, clinging to a trace that circled the dog's neck, again staggered forward. The big husky, excited by the answering howls of the post dogs appearing from all directions, dragged his reeling master up the trail. On came the strange pair, stricken voyageur and faithful dog, but as Cristy reached them, the legs of the man doubled under him and he lurched forward on the snow. With a whine the husky turned to the motionless figure. Then he faced the strangers with a warning growl, and the astonished Cristy saw on his broad chest a large white star.

"Prince! By heaven, it's the pup!" cried the amazed factor.

On guard over the body of his master, whose face was invisible, the huge husky, narrow eyes blazing, held the two men in their tracks.

"Don't y' know me, Prince? Good old Prince!" coaxed Cristy, reaching a hand toward the dog, who stood perplexed by the voice of the factor and the familiar white buildings grouped on the shore ahead.

With a moan, the one in the snow turned and raised himself on an elbow. Across the lean bearded face a strip of torn shirt was bound, to shield the inflamed eyes from the sun-glare on the crust. A mittenless hand, blue from frost, reached up and touched the dog. Then the wanderer said weakly: "I hear the huskies—Prince. We must be home—at last!"

"Bruce! Bruce! my lad!" cried his father, rushing to his stricken son.

With a bound the dog met the factor halfway, but the great fangs did not strike, for he had recognized his old friend.

Tenderly the starved and half-delirous youth was placed in the cariole sled and brought to the post.

Huskies, hurrying from far and near at the challenge from the river, already had been

driven away when the Queen appeared. They were climbing the shore trail when she came trotting up to the great dog who marched beside the cariole sled within reach of his master's hand. The Prince pricked up his ears, whined uncertainly, and saluted her with a loud bark. With a low rumble of resentment in her throat at the presence at Rupert of a strange husky whose shoulders topped her own by inches, she gingerly approached nearer. For a moment slant eyes looked into slant eyes, as mother and son stood motionless. Then, yelping wildly, the Prince sprang toward her. Surprised, the Queen stood on the defensive, when her bulky puppy carromed into her shoulders, rolling her over and over; but as they met, her nose, like a flash caught the glad news. Then there followed a medley of yelps, leaps, caresses, and acrobatic expressions of unbounded canine delight such as Rupert House had witnessed in the memory of no living man. Bereft of their senses, mother and son raced up the high shores, round the trade-house, over to the factor's quarters and return, barking like mad.

When Bruce Cristy's mother took him into her arms at the factor's door, there happened to the proud Queen, in the presence of the post, that which no husky before had had

either strength or daring to attempt. Running at her side, the joy-maddened Prince, weakened by three days' fast though he was, suddenly seized the Queen by the back of her great neck and, with a wrench, threw her on the snow. And to the amazement of the onlookers, instead of the swift punishment which they anticipated would be meted out to him for his audacity, his cold nose felt the swift lick of a hot tongue as she gained her feet, and again joined him in a mad frolic.

So did the Queen welcome her lost son.

That night Bruce Cristy lay in bed with snow compresses cooling the inflamed eyes and aching head. While, at intervals, his mother fed him nourishing broth, he briefly told the story of the finding of the Prince, his fight for life at the Kettle Rapids, and the long struggle home without fire or food.

Later, as his worn-out son slept, Cristy tiptoed to the door and, slipping into his snowshoes, sought the shack behind the trade-house. Softly entering on moccasined feet, he smiled at the picture that the light from the low moon shining through the door revealed. For there, lying sprawled upon the sacking in the corner where he came into the world, lay the wanderer, sleeping deeply after a bountiful supper, while

at his side, with her nose resting on the big-boned, hairy forepaws of her son, the Queen kept guard.

At times as she slept her deep chest swelled and then contracted as she heaved a contented sigh in her dreams, which were sweet, for at last the Prince had come home.

THE LAST ADVENTURE[1]

THE STORY OF THAT DAY IN JUNE WHEN WOLF THE ARISTOCRAT GAVE HIS LIFE FOR A CUR

By Albert Payson Terhune

She was not a collie. Heaven alone knew what she was. She was nondescript and thin and homely. Many mongrels are beautiful and wise and valuable. Some are not. This particular dog was the least promising of the heterogeneous mongrel clan.

Wolf met her by the merest chance—a lucky chance for her and a fatal chance for him.

He was lying drowsily in the lakeside summerhouse of The Place, one warm May afternoon, behind the hammock wherein the Mistress and the Master were reading. Down the lake, from a boys' camp, a mile above, came a boat with three of the young campers in it. Two of the boys were rowing. A third sat in the stern. He was holding by the neck a most disreputable yellowish-gray dog, bone-thin and unkempt.

The dog was collarless. But around her stringy throat was tied a thick rope. To the other end of the rope was tied a stone.

[1]Reprinted by permission of the author from *Good Housekeeping*.

"Look!" cried the Mistress in keen distress. "They're going to drown that poor dog. See the stone and the rope? Oh, *don't* let them!"

"What's the main idea?" called the Master, hailing the boat's occupants.

"This dog's been hanging round our camp," called back the lad in the stern. "She's stole our grub a couple of times. We stoned her away, but she always comes back. We're going to get rid of her. We didn't want to drown her up where we swim. It's bad for the water. So we're rowing her down to the dam. Going to throw her over the falls. She—"

"You're going to do nothing of the kind!" blazed the Mistress, jumping up and running to the edge of the lake. "You're not—"

"She ain't your dog, is she?" retorted the boy in the stern. "Then s'pose you mind your own business, if you've got any business to mind!"

His two companions laughed in glad applause of this chivalric reply. The mongrel, at sound of the Mistress' voice, had got to her feet and was whining in anguished appeal.

Wolf had come to the lakeside with the Mistress. And the wise collie read the mongrel's whimpered appeal as well as if it were couched in words. He growled and ran out a few feet into the water.

The Master had departed on a bee-line for The Place's near-by boathouse. He was traveling rapidly. It was not on the free list for any one to speak to the Mistress as the camper in the stern had spoken. The only way to wreak punishment was from another boat.

The youth in the stern noted the man's hurried progress toward the boathouse. Being a lad of action, he did not dream away the intervening moments, but shouted to the two rowers to put on speed. As he gave this order, he proceeded to lighten the boat by heaving the mongrel overboard.

Away sped the oarsmen upstream. The miserable dog fell into the water with a resounding splash.

The fall carried the mongrel far beneath the surface, the stone dragging her down. But the boys had affixed to the rope a stone somewhat too light for its lethal purpose. Fighting for her life, the unfortunate mongrel's mad battling brought her to the surface for a fleeting space. Then the weight of the stone and her own lack of strength dragged her under again.

The Mistress waded out from the bank, forgetful of thin slippers and silk stockings. But at the second step she paused. A more potent rescuer was on the job.

As the mongrel had tumbled into the water, Wolf had dashed after her. Now, swimming with a force which carried his shoulders high above the level, he was forging forward to where she had vanished.

There was a feeble swirl just ahead, and again the mongrel's nose appeared briefly. By a last despairing effort of puny strength, she had managed to counteract the weight of the stone once more, and to battle her way back from the weedy depths.

But it was very apparently a last effort, and a feeble one at that. For as soon as her head appeared, it began to go under again.

The boat had been scarcely a hundred feet offshore when the boy tossed her overboard. And that hundred feet of space had been covered swiftly by Wolf's race through the ripples.

Now, as the mongrel began to sink, Wolf's strong jaws caught her by the nape of the neck. Churning the waters in his struggle to bear up the double weight of dog and stone, he spun about and made for shore, his white forepaws smiting the water to foam, his white teeth fixed as lightly in his exhausted burden's neck as the strain of upholding her would permit.

It was a gallant piece of work, and it called for all his compact strength. Snail-like was his

shoreward progress. More than once the weak writhings of the mongrel submerged his head as well as hers. But ever he fought on. And this was Wolf's way. Not from birth to death did he understand the meaning of defeat or of drawing back from anything he had begun.

The rescuer and the rescued were halfway to shore when the Master came rowing around the point of land between the summerhouse and the boathouse. A call from the Mistress, ankle-deep in water, directed his attention from the already far-distant boys to the two half-drowned dogs.

He rowed over to them. With his fingers hooked in Wolf's collar, he sought to lift the collie into the careening boat. But, as if divining his purpose and aware of what must befall the helplessly worn-out mongrel if she were let go, Wolf held his tight grip on the scruff of her neck.

Confronted with this double burden, the Master knelt down in the bottom of the boat, bracing himself and seeking to trim the leaky craft for the impending heave. Wolf looked up steadfastly and even gaily into the Master's face, happily confident that his own tough work was over and that his god would take over the tiresome job.

With some difficulty the man lifted the two dogs over the gunwale and into the boat, shipping several gallons of lake water as he did so—water that swished merrily about the knees and legs of his white flannel trousers and soaked him to the skin.

Wolf relaxed his grasp on the mongrel as soon as the latter was safe. Then, standing up, he proceeded to shake himself rapidly and with thoroughness, the spray from his rough gold-red coat deluging the Master afresh.

But the mongrel did not get up. She made no attempt to move. Slumpingly inert, she lay sprawled in the bottom of the boat, panting loudly, her eyes shut, the water streaming from her sparse coat and from her loosely open jaws. She was nearer dead than alive.

A homeless existence and such scanty food as can be cadged from rural ash cans and occasional camp garbage heaps—these do not conduce to strength in a dog. The fright and shock had completed her utter collapse.

She lay moveless when the Master landed on the bank beside the summerhouse. Wolf, on the contrary, hopped gleefully ashore, and once more treated his drenched coat to a thorough shaking—this time over much of the Mistress' white organdy dress.

"In all my days," grumbled the Master, staring morbidly down at his own wrecked costume, "I never yet went out of my way to do a decent thing without having reason afterward to be sorry I did it. My clothes look like the last hours of a misspent life. And all to save a mutt that is better dead! Wolf, if you hadn't saved what wasn't worth saving, we'd all be better off."

Wolf grinned and wagged his short, bushy tail vigorously, at sound of his name. Then he trotted back to where the panting mongrel sprawled. He bent over her, licking her face and seeming to urge her to rise. She opened her bleared eyes and wagged her lank tail weakly. But she made no effort to get up. Her cowed gaze drifted to the two humans. There was hopeless pathos in the look.

"That settles it!" growled the Master, forestalling his wife's plea. "We're saddled with her. The fact that she's weak and worthless is enough to make you champion her. All right. I'll carry her up to the barn and give her some aromatic. When she's able to get onto her feet again, a square meal will complete her cure."

Thus it was that a mongrel came to that home of thoroughbred collies. Nobody could be found

to claim her. So she remained at The Place. The Mistress named her "Undine," because she had risen from the waters.

Undine was a meek and gentle and timorous creature. Gratefully and cringingly she rewarded the care lavished on her. For the first time in her life she was receiving food instead of fright; care instead of kicks. She throve on the new treatment. Unobtrusive, gladly content to sleep in the barn and to confine her wanderings to the stable yard and the vegetable garden, she was little trouble to any one.

The astonishing change from starvation to good fare made her into another animal. In less than a month her scraggy body was rounding out into lines of comparative grace. Health, and an occasional brushing from the Mistress, gave her coat a certain luster and growth. Always she would remain a mongrel. Always she would remain cowed and stupid and homely. But she was no longer a scarecrow.

Wolf constituted himself her staunch protector and chum. He was strangely human in many ways. It is a human trait, for instance, to care more for those whom we have helped than for those who have helped us. And this trait was strong in Wolf. Always he seemed to remember he had saved Undine from death,

and the deed appeared to bind him to her for any future services.

He would forsake his big collie chum, Bobby, for a ramble with the homely mongrel who rewarded his friendliness with slavish adoration. He would fly furiously at any of the other thoroughbred collies of The Place that resented with snarl or growl the presence of the plebeian Undine among them.

The Mistress and the Master viewed with secret amusement this new friendship of their little old chum, Wolf. Very dear had Wolf become to them both, in these past few years. At ten, he had the vigor and fire of a three-year-old. His compactly powerful body had not yet taken on the blur of fat. His big dark eyes were still clear and bright. His teeth were unyellowed. Only by a few white hairs in his black eyelashes and by a slight silvering of the muzzle and by an occasional indisposition to romp did he show that Time was beginning to lay a gently heavy hand on him. Once in a great while, into his face would creep, fleetingly, the unmistakable and infinitely pathetic expression of an old dog. But for the most part he showed not an outward sign of age.

The Indian summer of his adventurous life had set in. But it had set in benignly and all but

imperceptibly. His days were sunnily happy at The Place, and now that Laddie and Bruce were gone, he stood first in the affections of the woman and the man he worshiped.

When at last Undine waxed sleek and healthy, the Master found a home for her. A farmer who lived some two miles from The Place, on the far side of the railroad tracks, wanted a dog. He came to The Place to price a collie puppy. But as such a pup was beyond his means, he was induced to accept Undine as a gift.

He and his family quickly grew fond of the gentle and timid mongrel. They made a pet of her. Undine's housing problem seemed definitely settled. But Wolf thought otherwise. So did Undine.

A week after the mongrel had been inducted into her new abode, the Master came downstairs and on to the veranda one morning, to find Wolf and Undine waiting, side by side, on the porch to greet him.

For the past two years, winter and summer, Wolf had slept at night on an old coat on the couch in the Master's study. Vastly proud was the little collie of his indoor sleeping quarters. The study windows stood open all night, in warm weather. (A burglar might as safely have stepped on a rattlesnake as to have ventured in

through one of those windows with Wolf on guard inside.) Occasionally, in the early morning, Wolf would jump out through an open window for a stroll on the grounds.

Apparently, he had gone out much earlier than usual, on this particular morning, or else he had sallied forth during the night. Somehow he had found his way to the two-mile-distant farmhouse across the tracks—where never had he been taken and which he had located nobody knew how. His discovery of Undine's new abode was one of the many unexplainable things about Wolf.

Thither had he gone in search of his homesick friend, Undine. He had chewed diligently at the rope with which she was tied to her kennel-coop, and at last he had severed it. Then he had escorted her back to The Place.

Now, with jaws agrin and white feet dancing and tail wildly wagging, he greeted the scowling Master. Wolf was monstrous proud of his nocturnal exploit. At the Master's mild reproof, he sought to look crestfallen. But the attempt was a failure. Unquestionably the collie felt a dramatic thrill at his own cleverness in finding and releasing and bringing home again the undesired mongrel.

After breakfast, Wolf was shut up in the

study, to his great indignation. The Mistress and the Master motored over to the farm with the unwilling Undine. There the mongrel was received with joy by the whole family, who had been standing sadly in front of her empty kennel, viewing the chewed rope.

"Better try a chain, next time," advised the Master. "Wolf's teeth are like shears. Besides, he has taught her the trick, now. She'll probably gnaw her own rope in two without his help. Buy a strong chain, instead. Even Wolf can't bite through that."

"I'll do still better," volunteered the farmer. "I've got a roll of chicken wire left over from fencing my hen-yard. I'll build a wire run around Undine's coop. Then she won't need to be tied up, at all. She'll be more comfortable, anyhow, in a run-yard than tugging at a rope. It'll give her more space to move around in."

"So *that's* settled," observed the Master as they drove homeward. "We've seen the last of the unlovely Undine. Poor old Wolf! He'll miss her."

"If he misses her," said the Mistress with quiet certainty, "he'll find some way to bring her back to The Place. I know Wolfie. What he wants to do, he does."

"Nonsense!" scoffed the Master in true masculine superiority. "Wolf is pretty clever. But he won't be able to bite a hole in a chicken wire wide enough to let Undine through. No, thank goodness, we've seen the last of her!"

The Mistress made no reply. Seldom did she argue. Far more seldom was she mistaken in one of her conjectures. So it was that she felt no surprise at all, next morning, when she and her husband came out on the veranda before breakfast, to find Wolf and the humbly ingratiating Undine awaiting them on the doormat.

Wolf's white forepaws were brown with new dirt. It had taken him more than an hour to dig a tunnel under the wire runway and to coax Undine to wriggle out through the hole. But at last the escape had been achieved. And he and she had got clear of the yard before the first member of the early-rising farmer's family was awake.

The Master looked foolishly at the two dogs and then at his wife. The Mistress was busily admonishing Wolf for his share in the prison-breaking, and she gave no sign that she noted her husband's air of ridiculous self-humiliation.

"I'm afraid," she said at last, "I'm afraid he's made up his mind to keep on rescuing her till the end of the chapter, and leading her back

here in triumph. I can't blame him for doing it. She is so fond of him, and he has elected himself her guardian ever since he saved her from drowning. I suppose he thinks he is rescuing her all over again, each time he sets her free."

"What's the use?" demanded the Master, glumly. "I've too much work to do to spend half an hour every morning taking the measly cur back to where she belongs. But you're right about his keeping on trying to get her loose. He knows it was a clever stunt. He knows *we* know it. That means he'll keep right on doing it—if he can. That's Wolf, all over."

"If the three children, over there, hadn't got so fond of her," said the Mistress, "I'd suggest we keep her here. Then Wolf would be happy, and so would she."

"And when people came here to see the collies," returned the Master, "they'd be sure to see her, first of all, and they'd think she was typical of all the rest of our dogs. No, thanks. Back she goes, the minute breakfast is over. If the man had done as I told him to, she couldn't have got loose. I'll tell him that the next time Undine comes sneaking over here, I'll put a bullet through her foolish head. Maybe that'll induce him to get her a collar and a chain."

He spoke with truculence. As usual, the Mistress read him correctly.

"You couldn't be hired to shoot her," she challenged, laughing. "You know perfectly well you couldn't."

"I didn't say I could," the Master defended himself sulkily. "I said that's what I'd *tell* him. And I shall. Let's go to breakfast, shan't we? Come along, Wolf."

Leaving Undine to wait for him on the mat, Wolf followed the two humans into the sunny breakfast room. There, as usual, he lay beside the Mistress' chair. There, as usual, he received from her a fragment of buttered toast. Thence, presently—timing it to a fraction of a second—he went to the other end of the table, just as the Master laid down his egg-spoon.

For years it had been Wolf's custom to cross over to the Master at that precise moment of the morning meal; to receive from him the emptied egg cup and to lap therefrom such few particles as might still adhere to its sides. Never by the wink of an eye did Wolf fail to reach the Master's chair just as the spoon was laid down. Even when the dog chanced to have been lying with his back to the Master he calculated the time to perfection, though nobody could figure how he did it.

Breakfast over, the collie was shut once more, ignominiously, into the study, while the Mistress and the Master took Undine to the farmhouse. As a rule, Wolf loved the study. Most of all, he loved the disreputable old couch on one corner of which was the ragged tweed coat that was his bed.

But it was one thing to enter the study from choice, and quite another thing to be shut in. Wherefore, nose between paws, Wolf lay in gloomy brooding until his acute ears detected, a mile away, the hum of The Place's car. Hundreds of cars passed along that road, every day. Yet out of them all, Wolf could distinguish the purr of that one motor.

He got up and trotted to the study door, his sulks forgotten. Five minutes later, the returning Master opened the door and let him out.

"Well, old friend," observed the Master, "he has promised me to go over to the village, before noon, and get a chain for the unspeakable Undine. You'll wear your teeth out, before you can scissor a chain in two. Best stay at home. It's none too safe for you to be crossing the railroad tracks every time you come and go between there and The Place. Just forget Undine. She isn't worth remembering. I'm afraid you've got low tastes, Wolf."

"He's too wise to get into trouble from trains," said the Mistress, in the hallway behind her husband. "Wolf has a wholesome respect for trains. I suppose he got it, years ago, from seeing us slow the car when we come to a track, and look up and down. Anyway, that's just what he does, whenever we're out walking and cross a railroad track. He knows more than most people about avoiding trains and automobiles. He knows more about *everything* than most people. Don't you, Wolfie, you queer little dog?"

Wolf wagged his tail and wiggled affectedly at the sound of his name and at the note of praise in her voice. Then, falling in at her heels as usual, he followed her and the Master out onto the porch.

The day was hot and breathless, the kind of day which, in the hill country of northern New Jersey, is almost certain to be followed by a thunderstorm. On the driveway three or four young collie puppies were at play.

Wolf was about to curl himself up at the Mistress' feet as she sat down to read her mail, when he wheeled about, his ear caught by a familiar sound.

A big delivery truck was turning in at the gate, a furlong above, and was starting down the

woodland driveway at carelessly high speed. The collie puppies continued to frisk about in the drive, heedless of the approaching menace.

Like a red-gold flash, Wolf was off the veranda and springing out among them. For perhaps the thousandth time in his ten years of life he was herding thoughtless dogs out of harm's way and to the safety of the drive-side turf.

So fast did the truck approach, today, that he barely had time to shoulder the last of the puppies out of danger before it was on him. With entire ease, despite his growing weight of years, Wolf dodged aside from under the grinding wheels of the vehicle as its driver put on all his brakes. Then the collie, as always, came mincing back to the Mistress, to be praised for this bit of swift herding.

"One of these days," prophesied the Master irately, "Wolf is going to get killed that way. Some time he is going to miscalculate the distance and get hit by a car. He takes chances that get on my nerves."

"No automobile is ever going to kill Wolfie," contradicted the Mistress, serenely confident of her pet's ability to protect himself. "He's too wise."

As usual, the Master's prophecy was wrong, while, as usual, hers was correct.

That evening, Wolf was left on the veranda, while the Mistress and the Master went to a dinner a few miles away. The collie did not consider himself to be on guard. It was far too early in the night for that.

Wolf wearied of the tedium of waiting for the return of the two humans. His thoughts went to Undine and to the encored jolly adventure of freeing her from captivity. On the two former times he had not set forth to the farm until long after midnight, when he had chanced to wake from his snooze on the study couch. But there seemed no good reason, on this lonely evening, to postpone his trip to such an hour or to let it break in on his night's rest.

He got to his feet in leisurely fashion, stretched himself fore and aft, yawned, and started up the driveway at an unhurried trot.

Out into the highroad he trotted, heading for the farm. He kept to one side of the thoroughfare, giving room to any and all motor cars. The Mistress had been right in saying that motors were no menace to Wolf. By uncanny wisdom and long experience he could thread his way through a jumble of them, without hurt.

Across the lake bridge he went. Then, leaving the road, he cut across lots. Another half-mile brought him to the railroad tracks. As

always, he slackened speed just before he reached the rails, and glanced up and down the right of way.

On the stoops of track-side cottages lounged several tired workers. To these Wolf gave no heed, as he passed on.

Then he was in the farmhouse yard. A light or two still burned in the house itself, for ten o'clock had not struck. A whimper of eager friendliness from somewhere to the rear of the yard welcomed the collie. Silent as was his padding advance, Undine had heard and scented him.

Wolf trotted to her kennel, and he and she touched noses in greeting. Wolf was dancingly elated at the bit of mischief he had planned. To him it seemed a rare joke to outwit Undine's new owner by setting her free from her clumsy bondage, every night, and taking her back to The Place.

He could read human faces and human voices—yes, and human emotions—with eerie skill. And from this power he knew that neither the Mistress nor the Master had been really angered at his releasing of Undine. He knew that it had amused them both, in spite of the Master's grumblings, and that they considered it clever. Wherefore, Wolf was minded to repeat the exploit as often and as long as it

should continue to make a hit. Which is not only dog nature, but human nature.

But tonight, on his very first glance at the tied mongrel, Wolf saw that his task promised new difficulties. For the tie-rope was replaced by a rusty length of chain.

The farmer had saved the cost of a new chain by hunting around in the stored rubbish of his barn loft until he came upon this ancient string of rust-scored links. With it he had fastened Undine to the kennel.

Decrepit as was the chain, it was still too strong for Undine to break it, by the most energetic jerk. Also, it was proof against gnawing. Wolf had sense enough to know this, without trying. And, according to his custom, he wasted no time in vain efforts at achieving the impossible.

Finding the chain unbreakable and unbitable, he nosed at Undine's neck. Instead of buying a collar, the man had made one out of rope; slipping a chain-ring through it, by which to fasten the dog.

This knowledge was quite enough for Wolf. While Undine stood stock-still, the collie's sharp, white incisor-teeth wrought scientifically at the thick rope collar. The rope, though stout of appearance, was long past its first

toughness. The task of severing it was simple. In a few minutes the rusting chain clanked dully to the ground. Undine frisked out into the yard, collarless and free.

She was very happy. Not only had her adored protector set her at liberty again, but she was going back with him to The Place and away from this mean abode where she was so homesick. Her wonted cringing meekness gave place to a coweringly frolicsome mood.

Without waiting for Wolf to lead the way, she scampered out of the yard and over the fields, heading for The Place and traveling at a shambling gallop. Wolf followed at a trot—the deceptively fast and choppy wolf-trot of a collie, which eats up the distance almost as rapidly as does any other dog's canter.

Gradually Undine's first elated gallop was slowing down. Wolf was only a few yards behind her as the two moved past the group of track-side cottages with the handful of workers still lounging on the stoops.

Idly these folk glanced at the dogs as the two chanced to cross the bars of light from the windows. But—at first—the humans paid no attention to the runaways.

The night was sick-hot. The cottagers' eyes strayed with tired interest to the thunderstorm

piling up from the northwest—the storm that might break the hot spell, and whose saffron flares of heat-lightning were staining the fat black cloud-rack almost continuously.

Then came a more distinct sound than the muffled groan of far-off thunder, and a clearer gleam than the cloud-hidden lightning could boast. From around the curve echoed the warning whistle note and rumble of the oncoming Stroudsburg Express—ten minutes late and making up lost time. The glow of the unseen headlight cast a flicker of diffused radiance through the dark.

Undine's gallop had slowed to a shuffle. Now she became aware of a pestilentially biting flea, supping behind her left ear. The flea bit deep into the tender flesh. Undine prepared to rid herself of him.

Halting, she sat down, and began to scratch her left ear vehemently with her left hind-claws.

Wolf had caught up to her just as she began these scratching operations against the flea. He, too, had come to a standstill. For he had heard the train and had seen its glow. As ever, he stopped and looked up and down the track. The train had not yet appeared around the near-by bend. So he crossed the track and glanced back to see what was delaying Undine.

There sat the misfortune-breeding mongrel, scratching luxuriously at her ear, oblivious to everything but the joy of abating the flea. She was sitting in the precise center of the track, midway between the two humming rails.

Wolf barked a sharp warning. Undine did not so much as turn her head at his summons. Stupid, her narrow-gauge brain wholly occupied with the flea, she was oblivious of all else.

Around the curve roared the Stroudsburg Express. Its headlight hurled a blinding white glare along the tracks. The loungers on the stoops beheld Undine, scratching away, directly in its path.

Now the flood of dazzling light made her look up stupidly from her labors. Directly above her towered the bulk of the locomotive. She was engulfed in a sea of hideous brilliancy. Scared past all powers of motion or of thought, she cowered shivering between the rails.

Then it was that Wolf did what he had been training, all his life, to do. The mighty heart of old Lad, his sire, ran true to form in this wise little son of his. Gaily he whizzed forward, a bark of joyous challenge ripping through the thunder of the train. To his death he dashed, as to a romp.

The loungers saw a flash of ruddy gold and

white dart into the glare of the track. They saw Wolf snatch Undine by the back, between his mighty jaws. They saw him swing her bodily into the air. They saw him sling her free of the rails.

It was all done in the flicker of an eyelash—almost faster than the human eye could follow—there in front of the onrushing locomotive.

Undine, screeching in helpless terror, hurtled through the air and rolled unhurt down the cinder-packed embankment to the safety of the shallow ditch.

Wolf, in practically the same motion, sprang back with the lightning swiftness of a tiger cat. To within the merest hair's breadth of space, he gauged his distance aright.

The grinding wheels missed him. So did the bulk of the locomotive. A bit of outjutting metalwork, at the left of the cowcatcher, touched him on the side of the skull. That was all.

When the unheeding train had raged past, leaving dust-eddies and a new blackness in its singing wake, the folk from the cottages came out with flashlights. They found Undine whining and sniffing above something at the track-side. His red-gold coat unruffled, his beautiful body stretched out lazily as if for slumber, and without one disfiguring mark on it, lay Wolf.

Over him whimpered dazedly the mongrel—the useless cur for which the hero collie had so blithely tossed away his vivid life.

"And yet," commented an editorial, a few days later, when a hundred newspapers all over America had told the tale of Wolf's shining death, "and yet people speak contemptuously of 'dying like a dog!' "

GAMMIRE[1]

By Booth Tarkington

Blue and lavender shadows, frayed with midsummer sunshine, waggled gayly across the grass beneath the trees of a tiny orchard beside Mr. Atwater's old-fashioned brick house, but trembled with justifiable timidity as they hurried over the billowing surfaces of an abnormally wide and thick colored woman who sat upon the steps of the back porch. Her right hand held in security one end of a leather leash; the other end of the leash was fastened to a new collar about the neck of an odd and fascinating dog, seated on the cement walk at her feet and regarding her with a gravity that seemed to disconcert her. She was unable to meet his gaze, and constantly averted her own whenever it furtively descended to his. In fact, her expression and manner were singular, denoting embarrassment, personal hatred, and a subtle bedazzlement. She could not look at him, yet could not keep from looking at him. There was something here that arose out of the depths of natural character; it was intrinsic in the two

[1]An excerpt from *Gentle Julia*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

A wide and thick colored woman held in security one end of a leather leash

personalities, that is to say; and was an addition to the bitterness consequent upon a public experience which had been brought upon her partly by his appearance (in particular the style and color of his hair) and partly by his unprecedented actions in her company upon the highway.

She addressed him angrily, yet with profound uneasiness.

"Huh!" she said. "You ain't feelin' as skittish as whut you did, li'l while ago, is you? My glory! I dess would like to lay my han' to you' hide once! I take an' lam you this livin' minute if I right sho' you wouldn't take an' bite me."

She jerked the leash vindictively, upon which the dog at once "sat up" on his haunches, put his forepaws together above his nose, in an attitude of prayer, and looked at her inscrutably from under the great bang of hair which fell like a black chrysanthemum over his forehead. Beneath this woolly lambrequin his eyes were visible as two garnet sparks of which the colored woman was only nervously aware. She gasped.

"Look-a-here, dog, who's went an' ast you to take an' pray fer 'em?"

He remained motionless and devout.

"My goo'niss!" she said to him. "If you goin' keep on thisaway whut *is* been, I'm goin' to up an' go 'way from here, right now!" Then she said a remarkable thing. "I ain' never los' no gran'child, an' I ain' goin' 'dop' no stranger fer one, neither!"

Elucidation rests upon the looks and manners of him whom she addressed. The dog was of a kind at the top of dog kingdoms. His size was neither insignificant nor great; probably his weight would have been between a fourth and a third of a St. Bernard's. He had the finest head for adroit thinking that is known among dogs, and an athletic body, the fore part muffled and lost in a mass of corded black fleece, but the rest of him sharply clipped from the chest aft; and his trim, slim legs were clipped, though tufts were left at his ankles, and at the tips of his short tail, with two upon his hips like fanciful buttons upon an imaginary jacket; for thus have such dogs been clipped to a fashion proper and comfortable for them ever since (and no doubt long before) an imperial Roman sculptor so chiseled one in bas-relief. In brief, this dog, who caused Mrs. Kitty Silver so much disquietude, as she sat upon the back steps at Mr. Atwater's, belonged to that species of which no Frenchman ever sees a sample without smiling

and murmuring, "Caniche!" He was that golden-hearted little clown of all the world, a French poodle.

Now, when Kitty Silver had first set eyes on this poodle, an hour earlier, she looked, and plainly was, dumbfounded. Never in her life had she seen a creature so black, so incredibly black, or with hair so kinky, so incredibly kinky. Mrs. Silver's young mistress had not observed her closely nor paused to wonder what thoughts were rousing in her mind, but bade her take the poodle forth for exercise outdoors and keep him strictly upon the leash. Without protest, though wearing a unique expression, Kitty Silver obeyed; she walked round the block with this mystifying dog; and during the promenade had taken place the episode which additionally upset her nerves.

She had given a little jerk to the leash, and spoken crossly to the poodle for not following her heels more closely, when instantly the creature rose and walked beside her on his hind legs. He continued to parade in this manner, rapidly, but nevertheless as if casually, and without any apparent inconvenience; and Mrs. Silver, never having seen a dog do such a thing before for more than a yard or so, and then only under the pressure of many inducements,

was unfavorably impressed. In fact, she had most definitely a symptom of M. Maeterlinck's feeling when he found himself left alone with the talking horses: "With *whom* was she?"

"Look-a-here, dog!" she said breathlessly. "Who you tryin' to skeer? You ain't no person!"

And then the blow fell. It came from an elderly but ever undignified woman of her own race who paused, across the street, and stood teetering from side to side in joyful agitation, as she watched the approach of Mrs. Silver with her woolly little companion beside her. When this smaller silhouette in India ink suddenly walked upright, the observer's mouth fell open, and there was reason to hope that it might remain so, in awed silence, especially as several other pedestrians had stopped to watch the poodle's uncalled-for exhibition. Morever, the woman was only slightly acquainted with Mrs. Silver, who moved in another and much blue-veineder set, and the breach of etiquette was the harder to bear with dignity on that account; for all at once the elderly rowdy saw fit to become uproarious.

"Hoopee!" she shouted. "Oooh, *Gran'ma!*"

And so, when the poodle "sat up," unbid, to pray, while Kitty Silver rested upon the steps

of the back porch, on her return from the excursion, she fiercely informed him that she had never lost a grandchild and that she would not adopt a stranger in place of one; her implication being that he, a stranger, had been suggested for the position and considered himself fit for it. He continued to pray, not relaxing a hair.

"Listen to me, dog," said Kitty Silver. "Is you a dog, or isn't you a dog? Whut is you, anyway?"

But immediately she withdrew the question. "I ain't astin' you!" she exclaimed, superstitiously. "If you isn't no dog, don't you take an' tell me whut you is: you take an' keep it to you'se'f, 'cause I doe' want to listen to it!"

For the garnet eyes beneath the great black chrysanthemum indeed signified that their owner was about to use human language; casually, too, in a human voice. Instead, however, he appeared to be content with his effort, allowed his forepaws to return to the ground, and looked at her with his head wistfully tilted to one side. This reassured her and even somewhat won her. There stirred within her that curious sense of relationship evoked from the first by his suggestive appearance; fondness was being born, and an admiration which

was fundamentally a form of Narcissism. She addressed him in a mollified voice: "Whut you want now? Don' tell me you' hungry, 'cause you awready done et two dog biskit an' big saucer milk. Whut you stick you' ole black face crossways at *me* fer, honey?"

But just then the dog rose to look pointedly toward the corner of the house. "Somebody's coming," he meant.

"Who you 'spectin', li'l dog?" Mrs. Silver inquired.

A boy and girl came round the house. They were both recently thirteen, though anything but twins; being first cousins, in fact, and mutually inimical, ordinarily, in manner and speech, if not in actual thought and deed. The girl was Florence Atwater, niece of Kitty Silver's lovely young mistress; and the boy was Herbert Illingsworth Atwater, nephew unto the same lady. He trifled with a tennis ball as he came, and carried a racket under his arm. Florence was peeling an orange. At sight of the poodle they uttered exclamations betokening the liveliest interest, but halted a few feet away from him as a precaution.

"For heavenses' sakes!" Florence cried. "Kitty Silver, where on earth'd this dog come from?"

"B'long you' Aunt Julia."

"When'd she get him?"

"Dess today."

"Who gave him to her?"

"She ain' sayin'."

"You mean she won't tell?"

"She ain' sayin'," Kitty Silver repeated. "I ast her. I say, I say: 'Miss Julia, ma'am,' I say, 'Miss Julia, ma'am, who ever sen' you sech a unlandish-lookin' dog?' I say. All she say when I ast her: 'Nemmine!' she say, dess thataway. 'Nemmine!' she say. I reckon she ain' goin' tell nobody who give her this dog."

"He's certainly a mighty queer-looking dog," said Herbert. "I've seen a few like that, but I can't remember where. What kind is he, Kitty?"

"Miss Julia tell me he is a poogle dog."

"A poodle," Florence corrected her, and then turned to Herbert in supercilious astonishment. "A French poodle! My goodness! I should think you were old enough to know that much, anyway—goin' on fourteen years old."

"Well, I did know it," he declared. "I kind of knew it, anyhow; but I sort of forgot it for once. Do you know if he bites, Kitty Silver?"

She was noncommittal. "He ain' bit nobody yit."

"I don't believe he'll bite," said Florence, growing confident as she stooped and peered at the two garnet sparks behind the black chrysanthemum. "I bet he likes me. He looks like he was taking a fancy to me, Kitty Silver. What's his name?"

"Gammire."

"What?"

"Gammire."

"What a funny name! Are you sure, Kitty Silver?"

"Gammire whut you' Aunt Julia tole *me*," Mrs. Silver insisted. "You kin go on in the house an' ast her; she'll tell you the same."

"Well, anyway, I'm not afraid of him," said Florence; and she stepped closer to the poodle, extending her hand to caress him. Then she screamed with delight as the poodle, at her gesture, rose to his hind legs, and, as far as the leash permitted, walked forward to meet her. She flung her arms about him rapturously.

"Oh, the *lovely* doggie!" she cried. "He walks on his hind legs! Why, he's crazy about me!"

"Let him go," said Herbert. "I bet he don't like you any more than he does anybody else.

Leave go of him, and I bet he shows he likes me better than he does you."

But when Florence released him, Gammire caressed them both impartially. He leaped upon one, then upon the other, and then upon Kitty Silver with a cordiality that almost unseated her.

"Let him off the leash," Florence cried. "He won't run away, 'cause the gates are shut. Let him loose and see what he'll do."

Mrs. Silver snapped the catch of the leash, and Gammire departed in the likeness of a ragged black streak. With his eccentric ears flying in the wind and his afterpart hunched up, purely for comedy, he ran round and round and round the little orchard, simulating the wildness of the wildest dogs in the wild world. Altogether a comedian, when the children shrieked with laughter, he wild-dogged the more wildly; then all upon an unexpected instant came to a flat halt, facing his audience, with his nose on the ground between his two forepaws, but his hindquarters high and unstooping. And, seeing they laughed at this, too, he gave them enough of it, then wild-dogged again.

Presently, as he invited pursuit by scampering suggestively nearer and nearer to Florence and Herbert, on his rounds, they chased him,

whereupon he ran figures of eight, and wound them up in a hundred invisible strings, while they made great efforts to spank him as he went by them, but always failed even to "get his tag." They made it a game, and played it till all three were breathless, and came back to Kitty Silver and the steps once more, where Gammire sat by her feet with a spiral of pink tongue hanging from a wide-open mouth roofed with black.

Florence resumed the peeling of her orange.

"Who do you *think* gave Gammire to Aunt Julia?" she asked.

"I ain't stedyin' about it."

"Yes, but who do you *guess?*"

"I ain't —"

"Well, but if you had to be burned to death or guess somebody, who would you guess?"

"I haf to git burn' up," said Kitty Silver. "Ev'y las' caller whut comes here *is* give her some doggone animal awready. Mista Sammerses, he give her them two Berjum cats whut you tuck an' skeered, tryin' to wash 'em, so's they run away b'fo' they even had time to let you' grampaw hear 'em mew; an' ole Mister Ridgways whut los' his wife, he give you' Aunt Julia them two canaries that tuck an' hopped out the cage an' then out the

window, las' week, one day, when you' grampaw was alone in the room with 'em; an' Mista George Plummers, he give her that Airydale dog you' grampaw tuck an' give to the milkman; an' Mista Ushers, he give her them two pups whut you' grampaw tuck an' skeer off the place soon as he laid eyes on 'em; an' thishere Mista Clairidge he give her that ole live allagatuh from Florida whut I foun' lookin' at me over the aidge o' my kitchen sink—ugly ole thing!—an' you' grampaw tuck an' give it to the greenhouse man. Ain't none nem ge'lemun goin' try an' give her no *mo'* animals, I bet! So how anybody goin' guess who sen' her thishere Gammire? Nobody lef' whut ain't awready sen' her one an' had the gif' spile."

"Yes, there is," said Florence.

"Who?"

"Noble Dill."

"That there young Mista Dills?" Kitty Silver cried. "Listen me! Thishere dog 'spensive dog."

"I don't care; I bet Noble Dill gave him to her."

Mrs. Silver hooted. "Go 'way! That there young li'l Mista Dills, he ain' nev' did show no class, no way nor no time. He wearin' las' year straw hat right now. He be a hundred

year ole b'fo' you see him in autamobile whut b'long to him. Look at a way some nem fine big rich men like Mista Clairidge an' Mista Ridgways take an' th'ow they money aroun'! New necktie ev'y time you see 'em; new straw hat right spang the firs' warm day. Ring do' bell. I say, I say: 'Walk right in, Mista Ridgways.' Slip me dollah bill dess like that! Mista Sammerses, an' Mista Plummers, an' some nem others, they all show class. Look Mista Sammerses' spectickles: made turtle back; fancy turtle, too. I ast Miss Julia; she tell me they fancy turtle. Gol'-rim spectickles ain't in it; no, ma'am! Mista Sammerses' spectickles—dess them rims on his spectickles alone—I bet they cos' mo'n all whut thishere young li'l Mista Dills got on him from his toes up an' his skin out. I bet Mista Plummers th'ow mo' money aroun' dess fer gettin' his pants press than whut Mista Dills afford to spen' fer his'n in the firs' place! He lose his struggle, 'cause you' Aunt Julia, she out fer the big class. Thishere Gammire, he dog cos' money; he show class same you' Aunt Julia. Ain' neither one of 'em got to was'e time on nobody whut can't show no mo' class than thishere li'l young dishcumbobbery Mista Dills!"

"I don't care," Florence said stubbornly. "He could of saved up and saved up, and if he saved up long enough he could of got enough money to buy a dog like Gammire, because you can get money enough for anything if you're willing to save up long enough. Anyway, I bet he's the one gave him to her."

Herbert joined Kitty Silver in skeptical laughter. "Florence is always talkin' about Noble Dill," he said. "She's sort of crazy, anyway, though."

"It runs in the family," Florence retorted, automatically. "I caught it from my cousins. Anyhow, I don't think there's a single one of any that wants to marry Aunt Julia that's got the slightest co'parison to Noble Dill. I admire him because he's so uncouth."

"He is who?" Kitty Silver inquired.

"Uncouth."

"Yes'm," said Mrs. Silver.

"It's in the ditchanary," Florence explained. "It means rare, elegant, exquisite, obs, unknown, and a whole lot else."

"It does not," Herbert interposed. "It means kind of countrified."

"You go look in the ditchanary," his cousin said severely. "Then, maybe, you'll know what you're talkin about, just for once. Anyhow,

I *do* like Noble Dill, and I bet so does Aunt Julia."

Kitty Silver shook her head. "He lose his struggle, honey! Miss Julia, she out fer the big class. She ain' stedyn' about him 'cept mebbe dess to let him run her erran's. She treat 'em all mighty nice, aroun', class or no class, why, the mo' harder that big class got to work to git her—an' the mo' she got after her the mo' keeps a-comin'. But thishere young li'l Mista Dills, I kine o' got strong notion he liable not come no mo' 'tall!" Her tone had become one of reminiscent amusement which culminated in a burst of laughter. "Whee!" she concluded. "After las' night, I reckon thishere Mista Dills better keep away from the place—yes'm!"

Florence looked thoughtful, and for the time said nothing. It was Herbert who asked: "Why'd Noble Dill better stay away from here?"

Mrs. Silver decided that it would be more enjoyable to become ominously significant; consequently her merriment disappeared. "You' grampaw," she said, shaking her head, "you' grampaw!"

"What about Grandpa?" said Herbert. "What'd he do last night?"

"'Do'? My goo'niss!" Mrs. Silver uttered sounds like the lowing of kine, whereby she meant to indicate her utter inability to describe Mr. Atwater's performance. "Well, ma'am," she said, in the low and husky voice of simulated exhaustion, "all I got to say: You' grampaw beat hisse'f! He beat hisse'f!"

"How d'you mean? How could he — "

"He beat hisse'f! He dess outtalk hisse'f! No, ma'am; I done hear him many an' many an' many's the time, but las' night be beat hisse'f."

"What about?"

"Nothin' in the wide worl' but dess thishere young li'l Noble Dills whut we been talkin' about, this livin' minute."

"What started him?"

"Whut started him?" Mrs. Silver echoed with sudden loudness. "My goo'niss! He be'n started ev' since the very firs' time he ev' lay eyes on him prancin' up the front walk to call on Miss Julia. You' grampaw doc' like none nem callers, but he everlas'n'ly did up an' take a true spite on thishere li'l Dills!"

"I mean," said Herbert, "what started him last night?"

"Them cigareets," said Kitty Silver. "Them cigareets whut thishere Noble Dills smoke

whiles he settin' out on the front po'che on you' Aunt Julia. You' grampaw mighty funny man about smellin'. You know 's well 's I do he don't even like the smell of violets. Well, ma'am, if he can't stan' *violets*, how in the name o' misery he goin' stan' the smell nem cigareets thishere Dills smoke? I can't hardly stan' 'em myse'f. When he light one on the front po'che, she sif' all through the house, an' bim! She take me in the nose, an' like to choke me! You' grampaw awready tole Miss Julia time an' time again if that li'l Dills light dess one mo' on his front po'che he's goin' walk out there an' do some harm! Co'se she nev' tuck an' pay no 'tention 'cause Miss Julia, she nev' pay no 'tention to nobody; an' she like caller have a nice time—she ain't goin' tell 'em you' grampaw make such a fuss. 'Yes, 'deed, kine frien',' she say, she say. 'I like please strike a match fer to light my cigareet if you please, ma'am.' She say: 'Light as many as you please, kine frien',' she say, she say. She say: 'Smell o' cigareet dess deligh'ful little smell,' she say. 'Go 'head an' smoke all you kin stan',' she say, ''cause I want you injoy you'se'f when you pay call on me,' she say. Well, so thishere young li'l Dills settin' there puffin' an pullin' an' blowin' his ches' out an' in, an' feelin' all slicked

up 'cause it about the firs' time this livin' summer he catch you' Aunt Julia alone to hisse'f fer while—an' all time the house dess fillin' up, an draf' blowin' straight at you' grampaw whur he settin' in his liberry. Ma'am, he sen' me out an' tell her come in, he got message mighty important fer to speak to her. So she tell thishere Dills wait a minute, an' walk in the liberry. Oh, ladies!"

"What'd he say?" Herbert asked eagerly.

"He di'n' say nothin'," Mrs. Silver replied eloquently. "He hollered."

"What did he holler?"

"He want know di'n' he never tell her thishere Dills can't smoke no mo' cigareets on his property, an' di'n' he tell her he wasn' goin' allow him on the place nohow! He say she got to go back on the po'che an' run thishere li'l Dills off home. He say he give her fair choice; she kin run him off, or else he go on out an' chase him away hisse'f. He claim li'l Dills ain' got no biznuss roun' callin' nowhere 't all, 'cause he on'y make fo'teen dollars a week an' ain' wuth it. He say—"

She was confirmed in this report by an indignant interruption from Florence. "That's just what he did say, the old thing! I heard him, myself, and if you care to ask *me*, I'll be glad

to inform you that I think Grandpa's conduck was simply insulting!"

"'Deed it were!" said Mrs. Silver. "That's dess whut he claim hisse'f he mean it fer. But you tell me, please, how you hear whut you' grampaw say? He mighty noisy, but you nev' could a-hear him plung to whur you live."

"I wasn't home," said Florence. "I was over here."

"Then you must 'a made you'se'f mighty skimpish, 'cause I ain't seen you!"

"Nobody saw me. I wasn't in the house," said Florence. "I was out in front."

"Whurbouts 'out in front'?"

"Well, I was sitting on the ground, up against the latticework of the front porch."

"Whut fer?"

"Well, it was dark," said Florence. "I just kind of wanted to see what might be going on."

"An' you hear all whut you' grampaw talkin' on about an' ev'vything?"

"I should say so! You could of heard him *lots* farther than where I was."

"Lan' o' misery!" Kitty Silver cried. "If you done hear him whur you was, thishere li'l Dills mus' a-hear him mighty plain!"

"He did. How could he help it? He heard every word, and pretty soon he came down off

the porch and stood a minute; then he went on out the gate, and I don't know whether he went home or not, because it was too dark to see. But he didn't come back."

"You right he did'n'!" exclaimed Mrs. Silver. "I reckon he got fo'thought 'nough fer that, anyhow! I bet he ain' nev' *goin'* come back neither. You' grampaw say he goin' be fix fer him, if he do."

"Yes, that was while he was standing there," said Florence, ruefully. "He heard all that, too."

"Miss Julia, she s'picion' he done hear somep'm 'nother, I guess," Kitty Silver went on. "She shet the liberry do' right almos' on you' grampaw's nose, whiles he still a-rampin', an' she slip out on the po'che, an' take look 'roun'; then go on up to her own room. I 'uz up there, while after that, turn' down her bed; an' she injoyin' herse'f readin' book. She feel kine o' put out, I reckon, but she ain't stedyin' about no young li'l Dills. She want 'em all to have nice time an' like her, but she goin' lose this one, an' she got plenty to spare. She show too much class fer to fret about no Dills."

"I don't care," said Florence. "I think she ought to fret, whether she does or not, because

I bet he was feeling just awful. And I think Grandpa behaved like an ole hoodlum."

"That 'll do," Herbert admonished her sternly. "You show some respect for your relations, if you please."

But his loyalty to the Atwater family had a bad effect on Florence. "Oh, will I?" she returned promptly. "Well, I just politely think Grandpa ought to be hanged!"

"See here —"

But Florence and Kitty Silver interrupted him simultaneously.

"Look at that!" Florence cried.

"My name!" exclaimed Kitty Silver.

It was the strange taste of Gammire which so excited them. Florence had peeled her orange and divided it rather fairly into three parts, but the vehemence she exerted in speaking of her peculiar old grandfather caused her to drop one of the sections upon the ground. Gammire promptly ate it, "sat up," and adjusted his paws in prayer for more.

"Now you listen to me!" said Kitty Silver. "I ain't see no dog eat orange in all my days, an' I ain't see nobody else whut see dog eat orange. No, ma'am, an' I ain't nev' hear o' nobody whut see dog eat orange!"

Herbert decided to be less impressed. "Oh,

I've heard of dogs that'd eat apples," he said. "Yes, and watermelon and nuts and things."

As he spoke he played with the tennis ball upon his racket, and concluded by striking the ball high into the air. Its course was not true; and it descended far over toward the orchard, where Herbert ran to catch it—but he was not quick enough. At the moment the ball left the racket Gammire abandoned his prayers; his eyes, like a careful fielder's, calculating and estimating, followed the swerve of the ball in the breeze, and when it fell he was on the correct spot. He caught it. Herbert shouted: "He caught it on the *fly!* It must have been an accident. Here—" And he struck the ball into the air again. It went high—"twice as high as the house"—and again Gammire "judged" it; slowly and continuously shifting his position, his careful eyes never leaving the little white globe, until just before the last instant of its descent he was motionless beneath it. He caught it again, and Herbert whooped.

Gammire brought the ball to him and invited him to proceed with the game. That there might be no mistaking his ardent desire, Gammire "sat up" and prayed; nor did he find Herbert anything loath. Out of nine chances Gammire "muffed" the ball only twice, both

times excusably, and Florence once more flung her arms about the willing performer.

"*Who* do you s'pose trained this wonderful, darling doggie?" she cried.

Mrs. Silver shook her marveling head. "He mus' 'a' *come* thataway," she said. "I bet nobody 't all ain' trained him; he do whut he want to hisse'f. That Gammire don't ast nobody train him."

Then the enraptured Florence released Gammire and he wild-dogged again to the hilarious screamings of the three.

"Oh, goodness!" Florence said with a despondency which came upon her as the wild dog tamed himself abruptly, and returned to sit with them. "It's awful!"

"Whut is?"

"To think of as lovely a dog as this having to meet Grandpa!"

"Meet him!" Kitty Silver echoed forebodingly. "I reckon you' grampaw do mo'n dess 'meet' him."

"That's what I mean," Florence explained. "I expect he's just brute enough to drive him off."

"Yes'm," said Mrs. Silver. "He git madder ev'y time somebody sen' her new pet. You' grampaw mighty nervous man, an' everlas'n'ly do hate animals."

"He hasn't seen Gammire, has he?"

"Don't look like it, do it?" said Kitty Silver. "Dog here yit."

"Well, then, I —" Florence paused, glancing at Herbert, for she had been visited by a pleasant idea which she did not wish to share with him. "Is Aunt Julia in the house?"

"She were, li'l while ago."

"I want to see her about somep'm I ought to see her about," said Florence. "I'll be out in a minute."

She ran into the house and found her excessively pretty young aunt seated at a slim-legged desk, reading over a note which she had just written.

"Aunt Julia, it's about Gammire."

"Gamin."

"What?"

"His name is Gamin."

"Kitty Silver says his name's Gammire."

"Yes," said Julia. "She would. His name is Gamin though. He's a little Parisian rascal, and his name is Gamin."

"Well, Aunt Julia, I'd rather call him Gammire, though. How much did he cost?"

"I don't know; he was brought to me only this morning, and I haven't asked yet."

"But I thought somebody gave him to you."

"Yes—they did."

"Well, I mean," said Florence, "how much did the person that gave him to you pay for him?"

Julia sighed. "I just explained, I haven't had a chance to ask."

Florence looked hurt. "I don't mean you *would* ask 'em right out. I just meant: wouldn't you be liable to kind of hint around an' give 'em a chance to tell you how much it was? You know perfectly well it's the way most the fam'ly do when they give each other somep'm pretty expensive, Christmas or birthdays, and I thought proba'ly you'd —"

"No. I shouldn't be surprised, Florence, if nobody *ever* got to know how much Gamin cost."

"Well —" Florence said, and decided to approach her purpose on a new tack. "Who was it trained him."

"I understand that the person who gave him to me has played with him at times during the few days he's been keeping him, but hasn't 'trained' him particularly. French poodles almost learn their own tricks if you give them a chance. It's natural to them; they love to be little clowns if you let them."

"But who was this person that gave him to you?"

Julia laughed. "It's a secret, Florence — like Gammire's price."

At this Florence looked piqued. "Well, I guess I got *some* manners!" she exclaimed. "I know as well as you do, Aunt Julia, there's no etiquette in coming right square out and asking how much it was when somebody goes and makes you a present. I'm certainly enough of a lady to keep my mouth shut when it's more polite to! But I don't see what harm there is in telling who it is that gives anybody a present."

"No harm at all," Julia murmured as she sealed the note she had written. Then she turned smilingly to face her niece. "Only I'm not going to."

"Well, then, Aunt Julia"—and now Florence came to her point—"what I wanted to know is just simply the plain question: Will you give this dog Gammire to me?"

Julia leaned forward, laughing, and suddenly clapped her hands together, close to Florence's face. "No, I won't!" she cried. "There!"

The niece frowned, lines of anxiety appearing upon her forehead. "Well, why won't you?"

"I won't do it!"

"But, Aunt Julia, I think you ought to."

"Why ought I to?"

"Because—" said Florence. "Well, it's necessary."

"Why?"

"Because if you don't, you know as well as I do what's bound to happen to him!"

"What is?"

"Grandpa'll chase him off," said Florence. "He'll take after him the minute he lays eyes on him, and scare him to death—and then he'll get lost, and he won't be *anybody's* dog! I should think you'd just as lief he'd be my dog as have him chased all over town till a street car hits him or somep'm."

But Julia shook her head. "That hasn't happened yet."

"It *did* happen with every other one you ever had," Florence urged plaintively. "He chased 'em every last one off the place, and they never came back. You know perfectly well, Aunt Julia, Grandpa's just bound to hate this dog, and you know just exactly how he'll act about him."

"No, I don't," said Julia. "Not just *exactly*."

"Well, anyway, you know he'll behave awful."

"It's probable," the aunt admitted.

"He always does," the niece continued. "He behaves awful about everything I ever heard about. He—"

"I'll go pretty far with you, Florence," Julia interposed, "but we'd better leave him a loophole. You know he's a constant attendant at church and contributes liberally to many good causes."

"Oh, you know what I mean! I mean he always acts horrible about anything pleasant. Of course I know he's a *good* man, and everything; I just mean the way he behaves is perfectly disgusting. So what's the use your not givin' me this dog? You won't have him yourself as soon as Grandpa comes home to lunch in an hour or so."

"Oh, yes, I will!"

"Grandpa hasn't seen him already, has he?"

"No."

"Then what makes you say—"

"He isn't coming home to lunch. He won't be home till five o'clock this afternoon."

"Well, then, by six you won't have any dog, and poor Gammire'll proba'ly be run over by a street car some time in the evening!" Florence's voice became anguished in the emphasis of her appeal. "Aunt Julia, *won't* you give me this dog?"

Julia shook her head.

"Won't you *please?*"

"No, dear."

"Aunt Julia, if it was Noble Dill gave you this dog—"

"Florence!" her aunt exclaimed. "What in the world makes you imagine such absurd things? Poor Mr. Dill!"

"Well, if it was, I think you ought to give Gammire to me, because I *like* Noble Dill, and I—"

But here her aunt laughed again and looked at her with some curiosity. "You do?" she said. "What for?"

"Well," said Florence, swallowing, "he may be rather smallish for a man, but he's very uncouth and distinguished looking, and I think he doesn't get to enjoy himself much. Grandpa talks about him so *torrably* and—and—" Here, such was the unexpected depth of her feeling that she choked, whereupon her aunt, overcome with laughter, but nevertheless somewhat touched, sprang up and threw two pretty arms about her charmingly.

"You *funny* Florence!" she cried.

"Then will you give me Gammire?" said Florence instantly.

"No. We'll bring him in the house now, and you can stay to lunch."

Florence was imperfectly consoled, but she had a thought that brightened her.

"Well, there'll be an awful time when Grandpa comes home this afternoon—but it certainly will be inter'sting!"

She proved a true prophet, at least to the extent that when Mr. Atwater opened his front gate that afternoon he was already in the presence of a deeply interested audience whose observation was unknown to him. Through the interstices of the lace curtains at an open window downstairs, the gaze of Julia and Florence was concentrated upon him in a manner which might have disquieted even so opinionated and peculiar an elderly man as Mr. Atwater, had he been aware of it; and Herbert likewise watched him from an unseen post. Herbert had shown some braggadocio, declaring loudly that he intended to lounge in full view; but when the well-known form of the ancestor was actually identified, coming up the street out of the distance, the descendant changed his mind. The good green earth abruptly ceased to seem secure; and Herbert climbed a tree. He surrounded himself with the deepest foliage; and below him some outlying foothills of Mrs. Kitty Silver were perceptible, where she endeavored to lurk in the concealment of a lilac bush.

Gammire was the only person in view. He

sat just in the middle of the top step of the front porch, and his air was that of an endowed and settled institution. What passing traffic there was interested him but vaguely, not affecting the world to which he belonged—the world being this house and lot of which he was now, beyond all question, the official dog.

It had been a rather hard-working afternoon, for he had done everything suggested to him, as well as a great many other things which he thought of, himself. He had also made it clear that he had taken the most particular fancy to everybody, but recognized Julia to be the head of the house and of the universe. It was love at first sight, and though he was at the disposal of all her family and friends, he was at her disposal first. However suddenly, she was his Naomi, and withersoever she went, there would he go also, unless she otherwise commanded. Just now she had withdrawn, closing the door, but he understood she intended no permanent exclusion. Who was this newcomer at the gate?

The newcomer came to an abrupt halt, staring angrily. Then he advanced, slamming the gate behind him. "Get out o' here!" he said in a harsh and forbidding voice. "You get off this place!"

Gammire regarded him seriously, not moving, while Mr. Atwater cast an eye about the lawn, seeming to search for something, and his gaze, thus roving, was arrested by a slight movement of great areas behind a lilac bush. It appeared that some public building had covered its dome with antique textiles and was endeavoring to conceal it there—a failure.

"Kitty Silver!" he said. "What are you doing?"

"Suh?"

Debouching sidewise slowly, she came into fuller view, but retired a few steps. "What I doin' whur, Mista Atwater?"

"How'd that dog get on my front steps?"

Her face became noncommittal entirely. "Thishere dog? He just settin' there, suh."

"How'd he get in the yard?"

"Mus' somebody up an' brung him in."

"Who did it?"

"You mean: Who up an' brung him in, suh?"

"I mean: Who does he belong to?"

"Mus' be Miss Julia's. I reckon he is, so fur."

"What! She knows perfectly well I won't allow dogs on this place."

Mr. Atwater's expression became more outraged and determined. "You mean to say that

somebody's trying to give her another dog after all I've been through with—"

"It looks that way, suh."

"Who did it?"

"Miss Julia ain' sayin'; an' me, I doe' know who done it no mo'n the lilies of the valley what toil not neither do they spins."

At this, Mr. Atwater was guilty of exclamations lacking in courtesy, and turned again toward Gammire. He waved his arms fiercely. "Didn't you hear me tell you to get out of here?"

Gammire observed the gesture, and at once "sat up," placed his forepaws over his nose, and prayed.

Mr. Atwater was incensed.

"Get out of here, you woolly black scoundrel!"

Mrs. Silver, startled, uttered a cry of injury, then perceived that she had mistaken her employer's intention. Gammire also appeared to mistake it, for he rose to his full height, on his hind legs, and in this humanlike posture hopped down the steps and "walked" in a wide circle. He did this with an affection of conscientiousness thoroughly hypocritical; he really meant to be humorous and entertaining; but the effect upon the gentleman for whom he performed was not reassuring.

"My heavens!" Mr. Atwater cried lamentably. "Somebody's given her one of those things at last! I don't like *any* kind of dog, but if there's one dam' thing on earth I *won't* stand, it's a trick poodle!"

And while the tactless Gammire went madly on, "walking" a circle round him, Mr. Atwater's eye furiously searched the borders of the path, the lawn, and otherwheres, looking for anything that might serve as an effective missile. He had never kicked a dog or struck one with his hand, in his life; he had a confirmed theory that it was always better policy to throw something. "Idiot poodle!" he said.

But Gammire's tricks were not mere idiocy in the eyes of Mr. Atwater's daughter, as she watched them. They had brought to her mind the tricks of the Jongleur of Notre Dame, that simple creature who had nothing to offer heaven itself, to mollify heaven's rulers, except his entertainment of juggling and nonsense; so that he sang his thin jocosities and played his poor tricks of legerdemain before the sacred figure of the Madonna, but when the pious would have struck him down for it, she miraculously came to life for just long enough to smile on him and show that he was right to offer his absurd best. And thus, as Julia watched the little Jongleur

upon the lawn, she saw that was what he was doing, too: offering all he knew, hoping that some one might laugh at him, and like him. And, not curiously, after all, if everything were known, she found herself thinking of another foolish creature, who had nothing in the world to offer anybody, except what came out of the wistfulness of a foolish, loving heart. Then, though her lips smiled faintly as she thought of Noble Dill, all at once a brightness trembled along the eyelids of the Prettiest Girl in Town, and glimmered over, a moment later, to shine upon her cheek.

"You get out!" Mr. Atwater shouted. "D'ye hear me, you poodle?"

He found a missile, a stone of fair diameter. He hurled it violently.

"*There*, darn you!"

The stone missed, and Gammire fled desperately in the direction in which it had gone.

"You get over that fence!" Mr. Atwater bellowed. "You wait till I find another rock, and I'll bust a rib for you!"

He began to search for another stone, but, before he could find one, Gammire returned with the first. He deposited it upon the ground at Mr. Atwater's feet.

"There's your rock," he said.

Mr. Atwater looked down at him fiercely, and through the black chrysanthemum two garnet sparks glinted waggishly.

"Didn't you hear me tell you what I'd do if you didn't get out o' here, you darn poodle?"

Gammire "sat up," placed his forepaws together over his nose, and prayed. "There's your rock," he said. "Let's get on with the game!"

Mr. Atwater turned to Kitty Silver. "Does he—does he know how to speak, or shake hands, or anything like that?"

Two mornings later, as the peculiar old man sat at breakfast, he said to the lady across the table: "Look here, who did give Gamin to us?"

Julia bit her lip; she even cast down her eyes.

"Well, who was it?"

Her demureness still increased. "It was — Noble Dill."

Mr. Atwater was silent; he looked down and caught a clownish gleam out of a blackness neighboring his knee. "Well, see here," he said. "Why can't you—why can't you—"

"Why can't I what?"

"Why can't you sit out in the yard, the next time he calls here, instead of on the porch where it blows all through the house? It's just as pleasant to sit under the trees, isn't it?"

"Pleasanter," said Julia; and her black-sapphire eyes still remained demure under the deep lashes.

Gammire appeared to be a successful envoy — it seemed even possible that, like Orlando's wrestling, he had overthrown more than his enemy.

THE LOST DOG[1]

By Mary E. Wilkins Freeman

The dog was speeding, nose to the ground; he had missed his master early in the morning; now it was late afternoon, but at last he thought he was on his track. He went like a wind, his ears pointed ahead, his slender legs seemingly flat against his body; he was eagerness expressed by a straight line of impetuous motion. He had had nothing to eat all day; he was spent with anxiety and fatigue and hunger; but now, now, he believed he was on his master's track, and all that was forgotten.

But all at once he stopped, his tail dropped between his legs, and he skulked away from the false track in an agony of mortification and despair. It had ended abruptly at a street corner, where the man had taken a carriage. He doubled and went back for his life to the last place where he had seen his master in the morning. It was a crowded corner, and the people were passing and repassing, weaving in and out, a great concourse of humanity following the wonderful maze of their own purposes.

[1]From *Understudies*. Copyright October, 1900, by Harper & Brothers. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

The dog sniffed at the heels of one and another. He followed, and retreated; he dodged, and skulked. He was a thing of abject apology, and felt no resentment at a kick when he got in the way of that tide of human progress. The dog without his master was like modesty without raiment, like a body without a soul. Without his master he was not even a dog; he was a wandering intelligence only, and had fallen below his inheritance of dog wit.

He yelped now and then, but his yelp would have been unintelligible to another of his species. He put his nose to the ground; the confusion of scents and his despair made him, as it were, deaf in his special acuteness. He blindly ran after this one and that one. Now and then he heard a voice which made his heart leap, and was after the owner at a bound, but it was never his master.

The city lights were blazing out, and the raw night settling down; on the corner were two steady, interweaving streams to the right and left of people going homeward, and all with the thought of shelter and food and fire and rest.

Finally the dog fastened his despairing eyes upon a man coming around the corner, and he followed him. He knew he was not his master, but there was that about him which awakened

that wisdom of dependence which had come down to him through generations. He knew that here was a man who could love a dog.

So he followed him on and on, moving swiftly at heel, keeping well in shadow, his eyes fixed anxiously upon the man's back, ready to be off at the first symptom of his turning. But the man did not see him until he had reached his home, which was a mile beyond the city limits, quite in the country.

He went up to a solitary house set in a deep yard behind some fir trees. There were no lights in the windows. The man drew a key from his pocket and unlocked the door. Then he saw the dog.

He looked hard at the dog, and the dog looked piteously at him. The dog wagged his tail in frantic circles of conciliation. The full moon was up, and there was a street lamp, so the two could see each other quite distinctly. Both the dog and the man were thoroughbreds. The dog saw a man, young, in shabby clothes, which he wore like a gentleman, with a dark and clear-cut face. The man saw a dog in a splendid suit of tawny gold hair, with the completeness of the pure blood in every line and curve of his body. The man whistled; the dog pressed closer to him; his eyes upon his face were like a woman's.

The man stopped and patted the dog on his tawny gold head, then entered the house, and whistled again, and the dog followed him in.

That evening the dog lay on an old skin rug before the hearth fire, but uneasily, for his new master was doing something which disturbed him. He was singing with a magnificent tenor voice, and the dog was vaguely injured in his sensibilities by music. At first he howled, but when the man bade him be quiet, he protested no longer, except for an occasional uneasy roll of an eye or twitch of an ear at a new phrase.

The dog had had a good supper; he had eaten rather more than the man. There was plenty of wood on the hearth, though the reserve was not large. But the man who sang had the optimism of a brave soul which, when it is striving to its utmost, cannot face the image of defeat without a feeling of disgrace.

He was a great singer; he had been born to it, and he had worked for it. Some day the material fruits of it—the milk and honey of prosperity—would be his; in the meantime there was his voice and his piano; and while there was wood, let his hearth fire blaze merrily; and while he had a crust, let him share it with a dog that was needy!

Now and then the man in the intervals of

his singing patted the dog, and spoke to him caressingly; and the dog looked at him with a gratitude which reached immensity through its unspeakableness.

The dog wore no collar, and the man marveled at that.

It was midnight when there came a step at the door and a ring, and the dog was on his feet with a volley of barks. He was ready to charge a whole army for the sake of this man whom he had known only a few hours. But in this case he would have attacked, not an enemy who threatened his master's safety, but a friend who brought him wealth and fame.

When the man returned to the room with the out-of-doors cold clinging to him, his face was radiant, jubilant. The tenor who had been singing in the opera house had broken his engagement, and the manager had come for him.

He told the dog for lack of another companion, and the dog reared himself on two legs, like a man, in his ecstasy of joyful comradeship, and placed his paws on the man's shoulders and licked his young face. Then the man sat down at his piano, and sang over and over his part in the opera, and the dog gave only one low howl under his breath, then lay down on the skin rug, with twitching ears and back.

That night the man's golden age began, and the dog shared it. His new master had his share of superstition, and regarded the old saying that a dog following one brought luck, and had, besides his love for the animal, a species of gratitude and sense of obligation.

In the days of luxurious living which followed, the dog was to the front with the man. He rode with him in his softly cushioned carriage to the opera house, and slept in his dressing room while the music and the applause went on. Occasionally he would make a faint protesting howl when a loud strain reached his ears. The dog loved the man for love's sake alone; that which won the adulation of men was his trial. He loved him not for his genius but in spite of it.

The dog in this new life grew to his full possibility of beauty and strength. His coat shone like satin; he was a radiant outcome of appreciation and good food; but palmier days still were to come.

One day the tenor brought home a wife; then the dog for the first time knew what it was to be the pet of a woman. Then he wore a great bow of blue satin on his silver collar, and often his coat smelled of violets.

The new wife was adorable; the touch of her little soft hands on the dog's head was ecstasy;

and *she* did not sing, but talked to him, and praised him with such sweet flattery that he used to roll his eyes at her like a lover, and thrust an appealing paw upon her silken lap.

Then he grew to an appreciation of himself; all his abjectness vanished. He became sure of himself and of love. He was a happy dog, except for one thing. Always in his sleep he searched for his old lost master. He was never on the street but down went his nose to the ground for the scent of those old footsteps.

And one day, when he had been with his new friends two years, he found him. His mistress' carriage was waiting, and he beside it, one day in spring when they were selling daffodils and violets on the street, and doves were murmuring around the church towers, and the sparrows clamorous, and everything which had life, in which hope was not quite dead, was flying and darting, and blossoming, and creeping out into the sunlight.

Then the dog saw his old master coming down the street, scraping the pavement with his heavy feet—an old man, mean and meanly clad, with no grace of body or soul, unless it might have been the memory of, and regret for, the dog. Him he had loved after the best fashion which he knew. This splendid brute thing, with his

unquestioning devotion, had kept alive in him his piteous remnant of respect for self, and had been to him more than any one of his own kind, who had put him to shame, and sunk him in the lowest depths of ignominy by forcing his realization of it.

The dog stood still, with ears erect and tail stiff, then was after his old master with a mighty bound. At first the man cursed and kicked at him, then looked again and swore 'twas his old dog, and stroked his head with that yellow clutch of avarice for his own possession and his own profit, rather than affection, which was the best his poor soul could compass.

But the dog followed him, faithful not only to his old master, but to a nobler thing, the faithfulness which was in himself—and maybe by so doing gained another level in the spiritual evolution of his race.

SMOKE[1]

By John A. Moroso

Jimmie Kelley's little girl Ellen come in with his dinner about twelve o'clock. As soon as Jimmie takes the eats from her hands and kisses her, she runs over to me and begins to say nice things, so I kissed her on her nose.

"Leave 'im alone!" Jimmie yells to the kid. "He's in bad."

She pulled back from me, and I beat it to Mamie's stall and got comfortable between Mamie's hind legs. I knew she wouldn't budge as long as I was there, so I moved up after a little while to her front legs. She reached down and nosed me and told me things would be all right after a bit. There's lots of fine human beings, but there ain't any born yet that is as good a friend to a fire dog as a fire horse is.

I tucked down close to Mamie's left hoof and listened.

"What's the matter with Smoke?" I heard Ellen ask her daddy.

"Violating the rules and regulations again,"

[1]Reprinted by permission of the author.

he said. "I had to beat him this morning, and I'll beat him every time he does it."

Ellen looked like she was going to cry, but her old man didn't notice it, as he was swallowing a can of hot soup. It smelled good.

"I brought him two bones, Pop," says Ellen, after watching her old man get around the eats.

"That's all right," says Jimmie. "Leave them with me."

Ellen began to whimper, and so I whimpered, and Mamie got uneasy and kicked the side of the stall an awful wallop.

It looked like we was all in bad. The only thing we had to be thankful for was the weather. The engine-house doors were wide open, and a nice cool breeze swept through the stalls.

Bing!

The chain in front of Mamie dropped.

The gong was sounding our call on a third alarm, and the men came shooting down the brass pole like lightning, one on top of the other.

Jimmie grabbed Ellen and tossed her in a corner as he dropped his eats.

Mamie was under the harness, in the center, in one half-second, her collar snapped tight, and she ready to make the big lunge that would

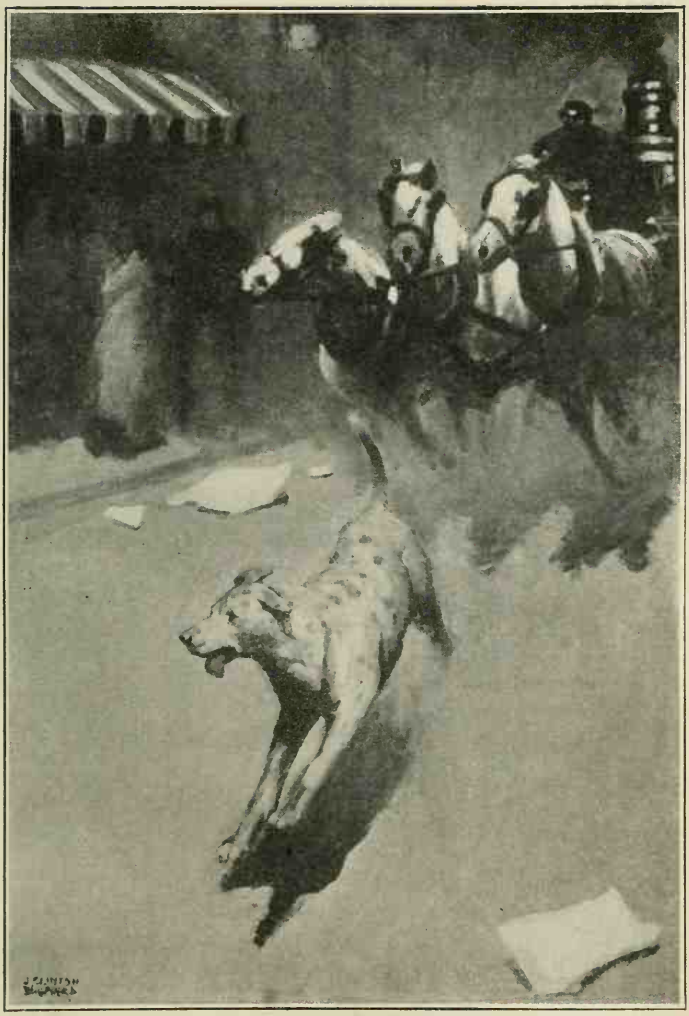
start us all off. Prince, just as white as she was, and Togo, looking like a snow horse, flanked her and began slapping the floor with their iron shoes to get the right feel of it for the start.

Number Sixty-four is the heaviest steamer in the department, and there ain't anything in New York can touch our team, Prince on the left, Mamie in the middle, and Togo on the right.

The second alarm had sounded twenty minutes before, and when the third came to call us out we knew that there was some fire to fight, and that it had the goats of the companies already on the job. The fire was down in the oil-and-paint section below the old Brooklyn Bridge. If it was a paint-house, that meant sore eyes for everybody, firemen, horses, cops, and dogs. Paint-smoke cuts like a knife, and the more water you pour on bursting barrels and cans the more they smoke.

Jimmie's kid was safe in the corner, and stood there without fidgeting. There ain't any fireman's little girl afraid of the noise and the rush when we make the start. Jimmie was up in the driver's seat with the reins in his hands, and leaning over Mamie's big white back.

I ran out and cleared the way for the steamer.



Smoke ran out and cleared the way for the steamer

I whooped it up as loud as I could, and started the Fulton Street peddlers running for cover. I nipped one of the slow ones on the heel, and he hollered. All the truck drivers heard me and pulled in to the curbs; and that part of my job was done, and done right. All my people were in the fire department, and my Grandmother Blaze had a reputation when she passed in, believe me. Her picture hangs on the wall in the commissioner's office at headquarters.

We had a down grade on Fulton Street to William, and our team was good and fresh. We made some fast time and turned north on William. I was keeping close to Mamie's nose all along the first stretch, but I knew what a mean street William was. The cross streets are so narrow and close together that any minute a truck might roll out in front of us. So I spread myself and took a half block lead on Number Sixty-four.

At Beekman Street I got the sting of the paint-smoke, and saw that the blaze was down near Pearl. I turned east, whooping it up for fair, and sending all the people and vehicles out of the middle of the road. Jimmie brought the steamer around the sharp corner with a rush and without touching the standpipe or the curb.

There ain't a man in the uniform can touch Jimmie for handling a team and steamer as big as ours. He keeps a whip in the socket, but only because the regulations say keep one. If the regulations told him to drive with one eye shut he would shut one eye. That's Jimmie. He's got red hair, and he sticks to the regulations.

I saw him twist his mouth down in the corner, and I knew he was jollying Mamie about being slow. The old girl spread out a little. Prince was slow, and she turned her pink nose around, as she pulled away, and snapped him on the jaw. The old man come to life and began to work harder. Togo never thinks of anything but getting to a fire, and Mamie had no kick on his work.

Number Sixty-four was coming down the Beekman Street grade to Pearl faster than any steamer ever went over a street in this big town of New York, and so I lit out to increase my distance, knowing there would be danger. The big engine belched and screamed as she come along, and the bell of the hose-wagon behind her kept banging away. But it all didn't count for much. The elevated trains over Pearl Street and the big grind of the bridge trains above them would drown any kind of noise.

The breeze was blowing from the river, and the smoke got thicker as we ran along.

I could see Jimmie's eyes watching me over Mamie's white ears as they went up and down, for he depended on me to keep the way clear for him. I wheeled every two bounds to make sure that things were right in both directions. Suddenly Jimmie stood up and began sawing on the reins. I turned a half somersault to rubber for the trouble, and holy Cerberus, if there wasn't a kid no bigger than myself toddling out in the street!

The baby was about five feet from the curb and just getting under way to cross the street. About four more steps and it would have been right in line for death. Everybody on the sidewalks was watching the big engine come down the grade, and the little one was so small that nobody noticed it. There was only one thing to do. I jumped for that kid and hit it right in the breast with all my weight. It let out a yell and fell back to the curb. Number Sixty-four had plenty of room, and I saw Jimmie settle back slowly in his seat and lean over Mamie's back again with a grin on his face.

We pulled up in one of the short streets down in the swamp sections, and of all the smells I ever got this one was the limit. A big whole-

sale paint-house was one sheet of flame, and the fire had spread to a hide-and-leather warehouse next door. When you mix the smell of burning oil and paint with burning hide and hair, and have to rush right into it and stay in it until the chief orders a retreat, just put it down as coming from old Smoke that, whether you're a man, a horse, or a dog, you know that you're earning your keep.

Jimmie was off his seat in one jump and loosening the bits of the horses. He stopped long enough to give me a slap on the shoulder for getting that kid out of his way, and I felt mighty good. What's a beating between old friends, anyhow?

But there wasn't any time for talking or tail-wagging. The sparks were falling through the smoke and smell, and Jimmie covered the team up to the eyes. Croker was right there on the job, and he was the maddest chief that ever tackled a fire. There was only one thing that ever got him to cussing out real loud, and that was when a fire got beyond four walls in the downtown section.

There wasn't any use wasting time on the paint-fire. There was nothing left there but burning oil, white-hot iron, and red-hot walls. The fire in the hide-and-hair layout was on the

sixth floor, right under the roof. It had eaten in through the eaves, and had a good hold on the roof timbers and the stuff piled up close to them.

The men were dropping like flies from the smoke. It cut holes in their lungs and made their eyes hang down on their black faces. There was ambulances from Gouverneur, Saint Vincent, and the Hudson Street hospitals. The doctors would cart off our crowd and cool 'em off and find places for them where they could breathe right.

Nellie—and she's a daisy—the mascot of Number Seventy engine, come wagging over to me and told me that Croker was working all hands on account of the crews being crippled by smoke. Her driver, Mike Tiernan, and Jimmie Kelley, she said, would all be up in the hide-and-hair building in about three seconds. The cops would look out for the horses.

I was telling Nellie that she was some mascot when I heard Croker yell through his megaphone and saw the battalion chiefs beginning to get their men together.

I asked her if she was going to follow Mike, and she said she was going to follow him if she got the chance, but that the men had been kicking her around for a half-hour, and she

knew she was going to get a beating when they got back to the house. She asked me what I was going to do.

"Well," I told her, "I'm just going to go as far as the regulations let me. I got a beating this morning myself. In my company they let the mascot go as far as the floor beneath the fighting line. I been in this business all my life, and my Grandmother Blaze has her picture hanging in the commissioner's office. Jimmie gives me an awful beating every time I break the rules, but there is no telling what will happen in a fire like this one. I'll keep after Jimmie and stay on the floor below him if nothing happens, but if anything happens, the regulations won't stand a chance."

Just then Jimmie turned his helmet and beat it into the hide-and-hair layout.

Say, maybe Sixty-four Company aren't smoke eaters. They just live on it. I've seen Sixty-four get away with gases in a big drug-house blaze right in their block that would kill Mamie to sniff, and Mamie has lungs and then some more lungs.

I waited until the hose-lines were stretched in the hide-and-hair building, and then sneaked in and followed them. I knew that there would be nozzles at the other end, and that my Jimmie

would be right there with a big piece of brass in his hands. He ain't afraid of anything except a trial before the commissioner for violating rules and regulations. He is a fireman, and he's had medals pinned on him by the mayor. I seen them in his flat on Rose Street.

I got up to the fifth floor and remembered the beating I got in the morning. So I stopped there. Jimmie and the crew was up on the sixth, and there was some smoke. It cut at your throat like the sharp teeth of a young bull terrier. I had to stay there and eat it, and I had lots of time to think over things, for the bunch upstairs would never retreat until they got the word from the foreman, and the foreman never slips it to them until a battalion chief or Croker himself shouts it.

I was thinking over things when along comes a white patch to the head of the stairs. Never mind how black it is, you can tell a fire chief. He wears a white helmet and white rubbers, coat and all. It was Croker. He was feeling the hose with his feet and going up to the fighting-line. I beat it over to one side, and he passed me without knowing that I was there. I felt a little easier about Jimmie. When Croker was chief and was around at a fire, there wasn't a man, horse, or dog didn't feel better

for seeing him. He used to swear something awful, and chew cigars, and spit around enough to put out a one-alarm; but he was one fire fighter.

He went up to the top, and the smell of hide and hair got worse. I was strangling, and so hunted around for a hose-coupling that leaked. I got one and found the puddle, and stuck my nose in it and kept it there. That's one of the first things a department mascot gets next to. You can take any Dalmatian that's born in the business and lock him in a gas chamber with a bucket of water, and he'll come out alive as long as the water has any air in it.

I could hear the men upstairs scrambling around, and the ax crew began to make some noise. But there wasn't anything about that to worry me, and I fell to thinking over things again. The regulations always keep me guessing. Now this one about a dog staying on the floor below the firemen might mean all right for mutts, but it don't do any good with a dog that was born in an engine house. The idea of that rule is that when the time comes for a retreat a fireman might stumble over the mascot and not be able to get up and make the getaway. Nobody ever stumbled over me, or over my mother, or my father, and my Grandmother

Blaze—but I told you about her picture up at headquarters. Before Blaze croaked from old age she told me a lot of things. She said that if the smoke was so thick she couldn't see, and if it was a hide or paint fire, and she couldn't get the scent of her driver, she could feel just where he was. She told me that if I got to love the people around me I could sense things and know just where they were and what was happening to them, even if they were miles away. She was right.

I was thinking about the old lady when something told me that things weren't right up above. I knew that the crew was losing out in the fight, and I was certain of it when three men come staggering down with axes and began to smash at the windows. They knocked them out in a jiffy, and the smoke come rushing by like a cloud, but some air come in, and I took my nose out of the puddle. There was a little light too.

I saw Mike Tiernan, Nellie's boss, stick his head out of a window, and signal. Then he learned far over and put a hand to his ear. I knew what that meant. He was getting the order to beat it. I felt the floor under me getting warm. The fire had mushroomed down from the eaves, had chewed up the laths back

of the plastering, and was eating away at the beams under the fifth floor.

Tiernan turned and rushed upstairs, yelling the order to retreat. I began to feel uneasy. I seen Croker, many a time, jump just a second before a roof dropped, after getting all the men away, but I seen Jimmie Kelley stick on a fire job so long that I begun to hate him.

The men come jumping down, all coughing and choking. Croker was staggering like he had begun a hard souse. Jimmie was the last to come down, and as he come I heard a crash. The base pins of the stairs, under the floor, had burned out. There was a sprinkle of warm water, and I knew that the fire had reached the hose the men had just dropped.

The top of a ladder poked over the window sill, and the men, some of them on all fours, like dogs, went for it and crawled over to the outside.

I wagged over to Jimmie, and brushed against his leg to remind him that I had stuck to regulations. The smoke was thicker with the fall of the stairs, and it was getting hotter.

The patch of light, where the window was, went out, the smoke was so thick. Jimmie dropped to his knees and began to feel his way with his hands. The fire in the beams under

our floor began to work through, and every now and then I would get singed. Jimmie was coughing awful hard, and I heard him say, "Mother in heaven! Mother in heaven!"

The regulations required me to go down to the fourth floor when the fighting-line retreated to the fifth, but regulations is meant for nice, quiet times. My pal was up against it on the fifth floor, and I guess I know my place. I'll take my beating. Nellie is going to get hers tonight, and there is some consolation in that.

I felt Jimmie's hand touch my back. He was trying to follow me. A big red gout came out of the floor, and I see the window again. The top of the ladder begun to move back. They must have thought that Jimmie was safe below. I left my pal and bounced to the window, and, believe me, I whooped it up louder than I ever did while on the run to a fire.

The bunch on the street heard me, and Skinny Deevers, our foreman, recognized my voice. I saw him begin to dance around, and then the top of the ladder fell back in place.

Skinny came up like a squirrel, and five men took their places on the rungs below him. When Skinny reached the sill he tried to grab me, but I ducked and began barking at him. He swiped at me again, but I pulled back and

barked some more. Then another sheet of flame come out of the floor, and I ran to Jimmie. The foreman bounced in the window when he saw my boss, and pulled him to the ladder in three yanks.

The floor began to sag. Something was giving away. I got my nose to the air as Skinny passed Jimmie down, and it was good air I guess.

I heard the chief shouting up for Skinny to hustle, but Skinny knew his business, and he wasn't going to run any chance of dropping my boss five floors to the sidewalk. He was that sure and easy in every grip that it's up to me never to forget that man.

The floor sagged again, and I crawled to the window sill.

Skinny was following my boss as the men passed him along, and he was down to the third floor. All I could do was to wag my tail on the hot window sill, hoping he would hear it and know I was thanking him.

Suddenly Skinny turned and began to climb up the ladder again. I heard Croker shout to him to come back, and according to regulations it was up to him to retreat, even if his own brother was in the building.

But he didn't mind the regulations. He

come up to the top rung and pulled me off the window sill, and down we went together, me holding to his shoulder like little Ellen used to hang on to my pal's shoulder when she was a baby and her mother used to bring her around to the engine house of an afternoon.

CHUMS[1]

By Edwin L. Sabin

Don't you remember when, your mother laughingly dissenting, your father said that you might have him, and with rapture in your heart and a broad smile on your face you went dancing through the town to *get* him?

There was quite a family of them—the old mother dog and her four children. Of the puppies it was hard to tell which was the best; that is, hard for the disinterested observer. As for yourself, in the very incipiency of your hesitation something about one of the doggies appealed to you. Your eyes and hands wandered to the others, but invariably came back to him.

With the mother anxiously yet proudly looking on, you picked him up in your glad young arms, and he cuddled and squirmed and licked your face; and in an instant the subtle bonds of chumship were sealed forever. You had chosen.

"I guess I'll take this one," you said to the owner.

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And without again putting him down you carried him off, and home.

How unhappy he appeared to be, during his first day in his new place! He whined and whimpered in his plaintive little tremolo, and although you thrust a pannikin of milk under his ridiculous nose, and playmates from far and near hastened over to inspect him and pay him tribute, he refused to be appeased. He simply squatted on his uncertain, wobbly haunches, and cried for "mama."

You fixed him in an ideal nest in the barn; but it rather made your heart ache—with that vague ache of boyhood—to leave him there alone for the night, and you went back many times to induce him to feel better. Finally, you were withheld by your father's: "Oh, I wouldn't keep running out there so much, if I were you. Let him be, and pretty soon he'll curl up and go to sleep."

Sure enough, his high utterances ceased, and nothing more emanated from him. Whereupon your respect for your father's varied store of knowledge greatly increased.

In the morning you hastened out before breakfast to assure yourself that your charge had survived the night; and you found that he had. He was all there, every ounce of him.

What a wriggly, rolly, awkward lump of a pup he was, anyway! How enormous were his feet, how flapping his ears, how whiplike his tail, how unreliable his body, how erratic his legs! Yet he was pretty. He was positively beautiful.

Your mother could not resist him. Can a woman resist anything that is young and helpless and soft and warm? With pictures in her mind of ruined flowers and chewed-up household furnishings, she gingerly stooped down to pet him; and at the touch of his silky coat she was captive.

"Nice doggy!" she cooed.

Upon which he ecstatically endeavored to swallow her finger, and smeared her slippers with his dripping mouth, and peace was established. Thereafter mother was his stoutest champion.

The christening proved a matter requiring considerable discussion. When it comes right down to it, a name for a dog is a difficult proposition. It may be easy to name other persons' dogs, but your own dog is different.

Your father and mother, and even the hired girl, proposed names, all of which you rejected with scorn, until, suddenly, into existence popped a name which came like an old friend.

You seized it, attached it to the pup, and it just fitted. No longer was he to be referred to as "it," or "he," or "the puppy." He possessed a personality.

The hired girl—and in those days there were more "hired girls" than "domestics"—was the last to yield to his sway. She did not like dogs or cats about the house; dogs caused extra work, and cats got under foot.

But upon about the third morning after his arrival you caught her surreptitiously throwing him a crust from among the table leavings that she was bearing to the alley; and you knew that he had won her. Aye, he had won her. You also found out that he much preferred a crust thus flung to him from the garbage to any carefully prepared mess of more wholesome food.

Probably this subtle flattery pleased the girl, for, although her grimness never vanished, once in a while you descried her smiling through it, in the course of a trip to the back fence while the puppy faithfully gamboled at her skirts in tumultuous expectation of another fall of manna.

He grew visibly—like the seed planted by the Indian fakir. Enormous quantities of bread and milk he gobbled, always appearing in fear lest the supply should sink through the floor

before he had eaten his fill. Between meals his body waned to ordinary size; but, mercy! what a transformation as he ate! At these times it swelled and swelled, until, the pan empty, the stomach full, its diameter far exceeded its length.

However, there was a more permanent growth than this, as you discovered when you awoke to the fact that his collar was too tight for him. So you removed it, and in the interval between removing the old and getting the new properly engraved, his neck expanded fully an inch. The old collar would not meet around it when, as a test, you experimented.

So good-by to the collar of puppyhood, and let a real dog's collar dangle about his neck. The step marked the change from dresses to trousers.

Not only bread and milk and other mushy, nonstimulating stuff did he eat, but he ate, or tried to eat, everything else within his reach. Piecemeal, he ate most of the doormat. He ate sticks of wood, both hard and soft, seemingly preferring a barrel stave. He ate leaves, and stones, and lumps of dirt, and the heads off the double petunias and the geraniums. He ate a straw hat and a slipper. He attempted the broom and the clothesline, the latter having

upon it the week's wash, thus adding to the completeness of the menu.

In his fondness for using his uneasy teeth, new and sharp, he would have eaten *you*, did you not repeatedly wrest your anatomy from his tireless jaws.

As it was, you bore over all your person, and particularly upon your hands and calves, the prints of his ravaging, omnivorous mouth.

Your mother patiently darned your torn clothing, and submitted to having her own imperiled and her ankles nipped; while your father time and again gathered the scattered fragments of his evening paper, and from a patchwork strove to decipher the day's news.

And "Look at him, will you!" cried the hired girl, delighted, indicating him as he was industriously dragging her mop to cover.

Well, like the storied peach, he "grew, and grew." Speedily he was too large for you to hold in your arms, and although he insisted upon climbing into your lap, you could no more accommodate him there than you could a huge jellyfish. He kept slipping off, and was all legs.

He fell ill. Ah, those days of his distemper were anxious days! He wouldn't eat, and he wouldn't play, and he wouldn't do anything

except lie and feebly wag his tail, and by his dumbness place upon you the terrible burden of imagining his condition inside.

Here came to the rescue the old gardener—Uncle Pete, black as the ace of spades—who gave you the prescription of a nauseous yet simple remedy which you were compelled lovingly and apologetically to administer three times a day; and behold, the patient was cured.

You didn't blame him any for rising from his bed; and you wouldn't have blamed him any for cherishing against you a strong antipathy, in memory of what you forced down his throat. But he loved you just as much as ever.

Now he developed roaming propensities, which took the form of foraging expeditions. Once he brought back a five-pound roast of beef, his head high in the air, and buried it in the garden. Diligent inquiry exposed the fact that the beef had been intended by a neighbor for a dinner for a family of six, and for subsequent relays of hash, etc. Your mother, with profuse apologies, promptly despatched a substitute roast, the original being badly disfigured.

Upon another occasion he conveyed into the midst of a group consisting of your mother and father and the minister, guest of honor, sitting on the front porch, a headless chicken, still

quivering. You were commanded to return the fowl, if you could; and after making a canvass of the neighborhood you found a man who, having decapitated a choice pullet, and having turned for an instant to secure a pan of hot water, was mystified, upon again approaching the block, to see, in all his level back yard, not a vestige, save the head, of the feathered victim. When you restored to him his property, he laughed, but not as if he enjoyed it.

Along with his foraging bent, the dog acquired a passion for digging. One day he accidentally discovered that he *could* dig, and forthwith he reveled in his new power. Huge holes marked where he had investigated flower beds or had insanely tried to tunnel under the house.

He grew in spirit as well as in stature. He had his first fight, and was victorious, and for days and days went around with a chip on his shoulder, which several lickings by bigger dogs did not entirely remove. Out of that first fight and the ensuing responsibility of testing the mettle of every canine whom he encountered came dignity, poise, and courage. His puppy days were over. He had arrived at doghood.

What sweet years followed! It was you and the dog, the dog and you, one and inseparable. When you whistled, he came. All the blows

you gave him for his misdemeanors could not an iota influence him against you. Other comrades might desert you for rivals of the moment, but the dog never! To him you were supreme. You were at once his crony and his god.

When you went upon an errand, the dog was with you. When you had chores to do, the dog was your comfort; and when you were alone after dark, he was your protection. With him in the room or by your side you were not afraid.

When you had been away for a short time, who so rejoiced at your return as the dog? Who so overwhelmed you with caresses? Not even your mother, great as was her love for you.

Did you want to frolic? The dog was ready. Did you want to mope? He would mope, too. He was your twin self, and never failed.

The sun and you were up together on that summer morning, and the dog joined you as soon as you threw open the barn door. Almost you had caught him in bed, but not quite, although he had not had time to shake himself, and thus make his toilet.

Intuition told him that such an early awakening meant for him a day's outing, and he leaped and barked and wagged his glee.

You worked with a will, and when the hired girl summoned you to breakfast the kitchen wood-box had been filled, and all the other jobs laid out for you had been performed, and you were waiting. So was the dog, but not for breakfast. He was waiting for *you*.

How he gobbled down the scraps constituting his meal, never pausing to chew, and frequently desisting in operations in order to run around the house and investigate lest, by hook or crook, you might be slipping off without his knowledge!

Now your boy companion's whistle sounded in front; and hastily swallowing your last mouthfuls, disregarding your mother's implorations to "eat a little more," with the paper packages containing your lunch of bread and butter and sugar and two hard-boiled eggs stuffed into your pockets, sling shot in hand, out you scampered; and the dog was there before you.

Along the street you gaily hied, the three of you, until the overarching, dew-drenched elms and maples ended, and the board walk ended, and you were in the country.

Civilization was behind you; all the world of field and wood was ahead.

Don't you remember how balmy was the air that wafted from the pastures where the meadow

larks piped and the bobolinks rioted and gurgled? Don't you remember how the blackbirds trilled in the willows, and the flicker screamed in the cottonwoods? Don't you remember how you tried fruitless shots with your catapult, and how the dog vainly raced for the gophers as he sped like mad far and wide?

Of course you do.

The morning through you trudge, buoyant and tireless and fancy-free; fighting Indians and bears and wildcats at will, yet still unscathed; roving up hill and down again, scaling cliffs and threading valleys, essaying perilous fords, and bursting the jungles of raspberry bushes; and you guess at noon, and sprawl in the shade beside the creek to devour your provisions.

During the morning, some of the time you have seen the dog, and some of the time you have not. Where you have covered miles he has covered leagues, and more than leagues; for a half-hour he will have disappeared entirely, then, suddenly, right athwart your path he hustles past, in his orbit, as though to let you know that he is hovering about.

While you are eating, here he comes. He seats himself expectantly before you, with lolling tongue, and gulps half a slice of bread, and looks for more. A dog's only selfishness is his

appetite. He will freeze for you, drown for you, risk himself in a hundred ways for you, but in the matter of food he will seize what he can get and all he can get, and you must take care of yourself.

The lunch is finished, and the dog—after sniffing for the crumbs—sinks down with his nose between his paws, to indulge in forty uneasy winks until you indicate what is to be the next event upon your program.

Presently, however, with a little whine of restlessness, he is off.

You are off, too. It is the noon siesta. The air is sluggish. The birds and the squirrels have relaxed, and the woods are subdued. The strident scrape of the locusts rises and falls, and the distant shouts of men in the harvest fields float in upon your ear. You are burning hot; but the water of the creek is cool—the only cool thing in your landscape. A swim, a swim! Your whole being demands that you go in swimming.

The dog already has been in a number of times, as his wet coat has evidenced. Feverishly following the winding stream, envying the turtles as they plunge in, upon your approach, you arrive at a bend where the banks are high, and the current, swinging against them, halts

and forms an eddy. Here the depths are still and dark and beckoning.

To strip those smothering garments from your sunburnt body is the work of but an instant, and in you souse, not without some misgiving as to possible water snakes and snapping turtles, but spurred by a keen rivalry as to which shall "wet over" the first.

Oh, the glorious, vivifying thrill that permeates you as you part the waters!

The dog again! From the bank he surveys the proceedings with mingled curiosity and apprehension, and finally, with a whine of excitement, dashes into the shallows and makes for your side. You are neck-deep, and he is swimming. His hair feels queer and clammy against your skin, and his distended claws raise a welt upon your bare shoulder as he affectionately tries to climb on top of you. You duck him, and grab at his tail; and, convinced that you are in no immediate danger, he plows for the shore, where he contents himself with barking at you.

Despite the dog's remonstrances and entreaties, you sported in that blissful spot until the sun was well down the west; now you frolicked in the cool eddy, now you dabbled amid the ripples of the shoals just below, and now you

dawdled on the warm, turfy banks. The dog stretched himself by your clothing and went to sleep.

At length, with blue lips and chattering teeth, and a ring of mud encircling your mouth, marking where years later the badge of manhood would appear, you donned your clothes, and, weak but peaceful, to the rapture of the dog started homeward.

He did not know that you were going home. When you had left home in the morning he did not know that you were coming here. He did not care then; and he does not care now. You are doing something, and he is a partner in it; and that is sufficient.

Homeward, homeward, through woods and across meadows where the birds were gathering their evening store and voicing their praises and thanks because the sun had been so good. Homeward, homeward, not talking so much as when your faces were turned the other way, not frisking so much as formerly, and with the dog trotting soberly near your heels.

You were dead tired, the three of you.

When you were about a block from the house, the dog pricked up his ears and trotted ahead, to wait for you at the gate. While you ate your supper he slept on the back porch; and after

his own supper he slunk straight into the barn, to bed.

And soon, he in his nest upstairs in the barn, you in your nest upstairs in the house, alike you were slumbering; for neither could possibly sleep sounder than the other.

Years sped by, and the dog remained an integral part of the household. Such a quaint, quizzical, knowing old chap, with an importance ridiculous yet not unwarranted, with an individuality all his own, thoroughly doggish, but well-nigh human. He was affectionate toward the rest of the family, but you he adored. He might occasionally bluffly growl at others, but never at you. You could make him do anything, anything. To him you were perfect, omnipotent, and with you at hand he was happy.

You emerged from the grammar school into the high school. Then arrived that summer when you went to visit your aunt and uncle, and stayed three weeks. You remember the visit, don't you?

And when you disembarked at the station on your return, and your mother was there to meet you, even while kissing her you looked for the dog.

"Where's Don?" you asked.

"Why, Ted," reproved your mother, as so often she had jokingly done before, "do you think more of seeing your dog than of seeing me?"

This silenced you.

But when you had entered the yard, and next the house, ungreeted by the familiar rush and volley of barks, you were impelled to inquire again.

"Where *is* Don, Mother?"

Mother put her arm around you, and laid her lips to your forehead; and even before she spoke you felt what was coming.

"Ted dear, you never will see Don any more," she said; and she held you close while you sobbed out your first real grief upon her breast.

When you could listen she told you all—how they had found him, lifeless, where he had crawled under the porch; how they had buried him, decently and tenderly, where you might see his grave and put up a headboard; how they had kept the news from you, so that your visit should not be spoiled; and how, all the way from the depot, her heart had ached for you.

Thus the dog vanished from your daily life, and for weeks the house and yard seemed very strange without him. Then gradually, the feeling that you were to come upon him unex-

pectedly around some corner wore off. You grew reconciled.

But to this day you are constantly encountering him in dreamland. He hasn't changed, and in his sight apparently you haven't changed. You are once more boy and dog together. This leads you to hope and to trust—indeed, to believe—that, notwithstanding your mother's gentle admonition, you *will* see him again, in fact as well as fancy, after all.

A LITTLE GHOST IN THE GARDEN[1]

By Richard Le Gallienne

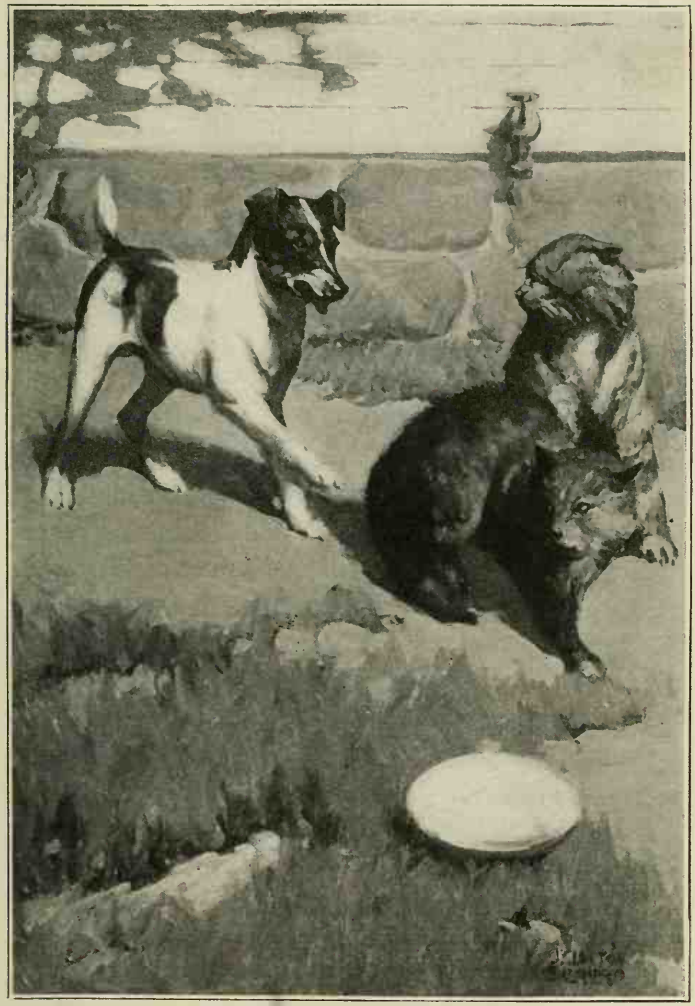
I don't know in what corner of the garden his busy little life now takes its everlasting rest. None of us had the courage to stand by, that summer morning, when Morris, our old negro man, buried him, and we felt sympathetic for Morris that the sad job should fall upon him, for Morris loved him just as we did. Perhaps if we had loved him less, more sentimentally than deeply, we should have indulged in some sort of appropriate ceremonial, and marked his grave with a little stone. But, as I have said, his grave, like that of the great prophet, is a secret to this day. None of us has ever asked Morris about it, and his grief has been as reticent as our own. I wondered the other night, as I walked the garden in a veiled moonlight, whether it was near the lotus banks he was lying—for I remembered how he would stand there, almost by the hour, watching the goldfish that we had engaged to protect us against mosquitoes, moving mysteriously under the shadows of the great flat leaves. In his

[1]Reprinted by permission of the author.

short life he grew to understand much of this strange world, but he never got used to those goldfish; and often I have seen him, after a long wistful contemplation of them, turn away with a sort of half-frightened puzzled bark, as though to say that he gave it up. Or, does he lie, I wonder, somewhere among the long grass of the salt marsh that borders our garden, and in perigee tides widens out into a lake? There indeed would be his appropriate country, for there was the happy hunting ground through which in life he was never tired of roaming, in the inextinguishable hope of mink, and with the occasional certainty of a water rat.

He had come to us almost as mysteriously as he went away; a fox terrier puppy wandered out of the Infinite to the neighborhood of our ice box, one November morning, and now wandered back again. Technically, he was just graduating out of puppyhood, though, like the most charming human beings, he never really grew up, and remained, in behavior and imagination, a puppy to the end. He was a dog of good breed, and good manners, evidently with gentlemanly antecedents canine and human. There were those more learned in canine aristocracy than ourselves who said that his large leaflike, but very becoming, ears meant a bar sinister

somewhere in his pedigree, but to our eyes those only made him better looking; and, for the rest of him, he was race—race nervous, sensitive, refined, and courageous—from the point of his all-searching nose to the end of his stub of a tail, which the conventional docking had seemed but to make the more expressive. We had already one dog in the family when he arrived, and two Maltese cats. With the cats he was never able to make friends, in spite of persistent well-intentioned efforts. It was evident to us that his advances were all made in the spirit of play, and from a desire of comradeship, the two crowning needs of his blithe social spirit. But the cats received them in an attitude of invincible distrust, of which his poor nose frequently bore the sorry signature. Yet they had become friendly enough with the other dog, an elderly setter, by name Teddy, whose calm, lordly, slow-moving ways were due to a combination of natural dignity, vast experience of life, and some rheumatism. As Teddy would sit philosophizing by the hearth of an evening, immovable and plunged in memories, yet alert on the instant to a footfall a quarter of a mile away, they would rub their sinuous smoke-gray bodies to and fro beneath his jaws, just as though he were a piece of furniture; and he



Puppy was never able to make friends with the cats

would take as little notice of them as though he were the leg of the piano; though sometimes he would wag his tail gently to and fro, or rap it softly on the floor, as though appreciating the delicate attention.

Of Teddy's reception of the newcomer we had at first some slight misgiving, for, amiable as we have just seen him with his Maltese companions, and indeed as he is generally by nature, his is the amiability that comes of conscious power, and is his, so to say, by right of conquest; for of all neighboring dogs he is the acknowledged king. The reverse of quarrelsome, the peace of his declining years has been won by much historical fighting, and his reputation among the dogs of his acquaintance is such that it is seldom necessary for him to assert his position. It is only some hapless stranger ignorant of his standing that will occasionally provoke him to a display of those fighting qualities he grows more and more reluctant to employ. Even with such he is comparatively merciful, stern, but never brutal. Usually all that is necessary is for him to look at them steadfastly for a few moments in a peculiar way. This seems to convince them that, after all, discretion is the better part, and slowly and sadly they turn around in a curious

cowed way, and walk off, apparently too scared to run, with Teddy, like Fate, grimly at their heels, steadily "pointing" them off the premises.

We were a little anxious, therefore, as to how Teddy would take our little terrier, with his fussy, youthful self-importance, and eternal restless poking into other folks' affairs. But Teddy, as we might have told ourselves, had had a long and varied experience of terriers, and had nothing to learn from us. Yet I have no doubt that, with his instinctive courtesy, he divined the wishes of the family in regard to the newcomer, and was, therefore, predisposed in his favor. This, however, did not save the evidently much overawed youngster from a stern and searching examination, the most trying part of which seemed to be that long, silent, hypnotizing contemplation of him, which is Teddy's way of asserting his dignity. The little dog visibly trembled beneath the great one's gaze, his tongue hanging out of his mouth, and his eyes wandering helplessly from side to side; and he seemed to be saying, in his dog way: "Oh, yes! I know you are a very great and important personage—and I am only a poor little puppy of no importance. Only please let me go on living—and you will see how well I will behave." Teddy seemed to be satisfied

that some such recognition and submission had been tendered him; so presently he wagged his tail, that had up till then been rigid as a ramrod, and not only the little terrier, but all of us, breathed again. Yet it was some time before Teddy would admit him into anything like what one might call intimacy, and premature attempts at gamesome familiarity were checked by the gathering thunder of a lazy growl that unmistakably bade the youngster keep his place.

But real friendship eventually grew between the two, on Teddy's side a sort of big-brother affectionate tutelage and guardianship, and on Puppy's—for, though we tried many, we never found any other satisfactory name for him but "Puppy"—a reverent admiration and watchful, worshiping imitation. No great man was ever more anxiously copied by some slavish flatterer than that old sleepy, carelessly great setter by that eager, ambitious little terrier. The occasions when to bark and when not to bark, for example. One could actually see Puppy studying the old dog's face on doubtful occasions of the kind. Boiling over, as he visibly was, with the desire to bark his soul out, yet he could be seen unmistakably restraining himself, till Teddy, after some preliminary

soliloquizing in deep undertones, had made up his mind that the suspicious shuffling-by of probably some inoffensive Italian workman demanded investigation, and lumberingly risen to his feet and made for the door. Then, like a bunch of firecrackers, Puppy was at his heels, all officious assistance, and the two would disappear like an old and a young thunderbolt into the resounding distance.

Teddy's friendship had seemed to be definitely won on an occasion which brought home to one the quaint resemblance between the codes and ways of dogs and those of schoolboys. When the winter came on, a rather severe one, it soon became evident that the little short-haired fellow suffered considerably from the cold. Out on walks, he was visibly shivering, though he made no fuss about it. So one of the angels in the house knitted for him a sort of woolen sweater buttoned down his neck and under his belly, and trimmed it with some white fur that gave it an exceedingly smart appearance. Teddy did not happen to be there when it was first tried on, and, for the moment, Puppy had to be content with our admiration, and his own vast sense of importance. Certainly, a more self-satisfied terrier never was than he who presently sped out to air his new

finery before an astonished neighborhood. But alas! you should have seen him a few minutes afterward. We had had the curiosity to stroll out to see how he had got on, and presently, in a bit of a rocky woodland near by, we came upon a curious scene. In the midst of a clump of red cedars, three great dogs, our Teddy, a wicked old black retriever, and a bustling bewigged and befurred collie, stood in a circle round Puppy, seated on his haunches, trembling with fear, tongue lolling and eyes wandering, for all the world as though they were holding a court-martial, or, at all events, a hazing party. The offense evidently lay with that dandified new sweater. One and another of the dogs smelt at it, then tugged at it in evident disgust; and, as each time Puppy made a move to get away, all girt him round with guttural thunder of disapproval, as much as to say: "Do you call that a thing for a manly dog to go around in? You ought to be ashamed of yourself, you miserable dandy."

We couldn't help reflecting that it was all very well for those great comfortable long-haired dogs to talk, naturally protected as they were from the cold. Yet that evidently cut no figure with them, and they went on sniffing and tugging and growling, till we thought our poor

Puppy's eyes and tongue would drop out with fear. Yet, all the time, they seemed to be enjoying his plight, seemed to be smiling grimly together, wicked old experienced brutes as they were.

Presently the idea of the thing seemed to occur to Puppy, or out of his extremity a new soul was born within him; for suddenly an infinite disgust of his new foppery seemed to take possession of him too, and, regaining his courage, he turned savagely upon it, ripping it this way and that, and struggling with might and main to rid himself of the accursed thing. Presently he stood free, and barks of approval at once went up from his judges. He had come through his ordeal, and was once more a dog among dogs. Great was the rejoicing among his friends, and the occasion having been duly celebrated by joint destruction and contumely of the offending garment, Teddy and he returned home, friends for life.

It is to be feared that that friendship, deep and tender as it grew to be on both sides, perhaps particularly on Teddy's, was the indirect cause of Puppy's death. I have referred to Teddy's bark, and how he is not wont to waste it on trivial occasions, or without due thought. On the other hand, he is proud of it, and loves

to practice it—just for its own sake, particularly on early mornings, when, however fine a bark it is, most of our neighbors would rather continue sleeping than wake up to listen to it. There is no doubt at all, for those who understand him, that it is a purely artistic bark. He means no harm to any one by it. When the milkman, his private enemy, comes at seven, the bark is quite different.

This barking of Teddy's seems to be literally at nothing. Around five o'clock on summer mornings, he plants himself on a knob of rock overlooking the salt marsh and barks, possibly in honor of the rising sun, but with no other perceptible purpose. So have I heard men rise in the dawn to practice the cornet—but they were men, so they ran no risk of their lives. Teddy's practicing, however, has now been carried on for several years in the teeth of no little peril; and had it not been for much human influence employed on his behalf, he would long since have antedated his little friend in Paradise. When that little friend, however, came to assist and emulate him in those morning recitals, adding to his bark an occasional—I am convinced purely playful—bite, I am inclined to think that a sentiment grew in the neighborhood that one dog at a time was enough. At all

events, Teddy still barks at dawn as of old, but our little Puppy barks no more.

Before the final quietus came to him, there were several occasions on which the Black dog, called Death, had almost caught him in his jaws. One there was in especial. He had, I believe, no hatred for any living thing save Italian workmen and automobiles. I have seen an Italian workman throw his pickax at him and then take to his heels in grotesque flight. But the pickax missed him, as did many another clumsily hurled missile.

An automobile, however, on one occasion, came nearer its mark. Like every other dog that ever barked, particularly terriers, Puppy delighted to harass the feet of fast trotting horses, mockingly running ahead of them, barking with affected savagery, and by a miracle evading their oncoming hoofs—which, to him, tiny thing as he was, must have seemed like trip hammers pounding down from the sky. But horses understand such gaiety in terriers. They understand that it is only their foolish fun. Automobiles are different. They have no souls. They see nothing engaging in having their tires snapped at as they whirl swiftly by; and, one day, after Puppy had flung himself in a fine fury at the tires of one of these soulless things, he

gave a sharp yelp—"not cowardly!"—and lay a moment on the roadside. But, only a moment; then he went limping off on his three sound legs, and hid himself away from all sympathy, in some unknown spot.

It was in vain we called and sought him; only after two days was he discovered, in the remotest corner of a rocky cellar, determined apparently to die alone in an almost inaccessible privacy of wood and coal. Yet, when at last we persuaded him that life was still sweet and carried him upstairs into the great living room, and the beautiful grandmother who knows the sorrows of animals almost as the old Roman seer knew the languages of beasts and birds, had taken him in charge and made a cosy nest of comforters for him by the fire, and tempted his languid appetite—to which the very thought of bones was, of course, an offense—with warm, savory-smelling soup; then, he who had certainly been no coward—for his thigh was a cruel lump of pain which no human being would have kept so patiently to himself—became suddenly, like many human invalids, a perfect glutton of self-pity; and when we smoothed and patted him and told him how sorry we were, it was laughable, and almost uncanny, how he suddenly set up a sort of moaning talk to us,

as much as to say that he certainly had had a pretty bad time, was really something of a hero, and deserved all the sympathy we would give him.

So far as one can be sure about anything so mysterious as animals, I am sure that from then on he luxuriated in his little hospital by the fireside, and played upon the feelings of his beautiful nurse, and of his various solicitous visitors, with all the histrionic skill of the spoiled and petted convalescent. Suddenly, however, one day, he forgot his part. He heard some inspiring barking going on near by—and, in a flash, his comforters were thrust aside, and he was off and away to join the fun. Then, of course, we knew that he was well again; though he still went briskly about his various business on three legs for several days.

His manner was quite different, however, the afternoon he had so evidently come home to die. There was no pose about the little forlorn figure, which, after a mysterious absence of two days, suddenly appeared, as we were taking tea on the veranda, already the very ghost of himself. Wearily he sought the cave of the beautiful grandmother's skirts, where, whenever he had had a scolding, he was wont always to

take refuge—barking fiercely, as from an inaccessible fortress, at his enemies.

But, this afternoon, there was evidently no bark in him, poor little fellow; everything about him said that he had just managed to crawl home to die. His brisk white coat seemed dank with cold dews, and there was something shadowy about him and strangely quiet. His eyes, always so alert, were strangely heavy and indifferent, yet questioning and somehow accusing. He seemed to be asking us why a little dog should suffer so, and what was going to happen to him, and what did it all mean. Alas! We could not tell him; and none of us dared say to each other that our little comrade in the mystery of life was going to die. But a silence fell over us all, and the beautiful grandmother took him into her care, and so well did her great and wise heart nurse him through the night that next morning it almost seemed as though we had been wrong; for a flash of his old spirit was in him again, and, though his little legs shook under him, it was plain that he wanted to try and be up at his day's work on the veranda, warning off the passer-by, or in the garden carrying on his eternal investigations, or farther afield in the councils and expeditions of his fellows. So we let him have his way, and for

awhile he seemed happier and stronger for the sunshine, and the old familiar scents and sounds. But the one little tired husky bark he gave at his old enemy, the Italian workman, passing by, would have broken your heart; and the effort he made with a bone, as he visited the well-remembered neighborhood of the ice box for the last time, was piteous beyond telling. Those sharp, strong teeth that once could bite and grind through anything could do nothing with it now. To lick it sadly with tired lips, in a sort of hopeless way, was all that was left; and there was really a look in his face as though he accepted this mortal defeat, as he lay down, evidently exhausted with his exertions, on a bank near by. But once more his spirit seemed to revive, and he scrambled to his legs again and wearily crawled to the back of the house where the beautiful grandmother loves to sit and look over the glittering salt marsh in the summer afternoons.

Of course, he knew that she was there. She had been his best friend in this strange world. His last effort was naturally to be near her again. Almost he reached that kind cave of her skirts. Only another yard or two and he had been there. But the energy that had seemed irrepressible and everlasting had come

to its end, and the little body had to give in at last, and lie down wearily once more, with no life left but the love in its fading eyes.

There are some, I suppose, who may wonder how one can write about the death of a mere dog like this; and cannot understand how the death of a little terrier can make the world seem a lonelier place. But there are others, I know, who will scarce need telling, men and women with little ghosts of their own haunting their moonlit gardens; strange, appealing, faithful companions, kind little friendly beings that journeyed with them awhile the pilgrimage of the soul.

I often wonder if Teddy misses his little busy playfellow and disciple as we do; if, perhaps, as he barks over the marsh of a morning, he is sending him a message. He goes about the place with nonchalant greatness as of old, and the Maltese cats still rub their sinuous smoke-gray bodies to and fro beneath his jaws at evening. There is no sign of sorrow upon him. But he is old and very wise, and keeps strange knowledge to himself. So, who can say?